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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2004

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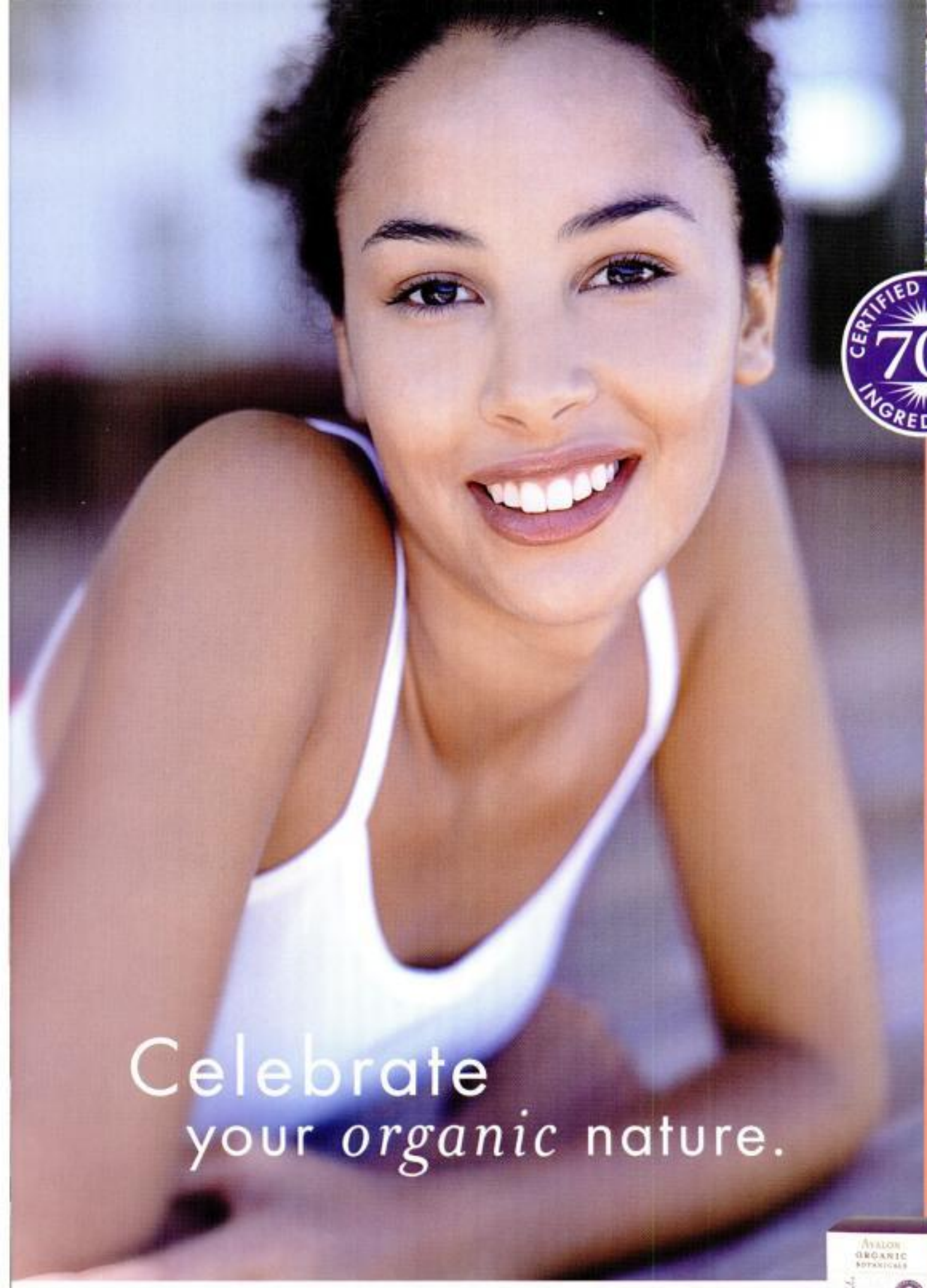

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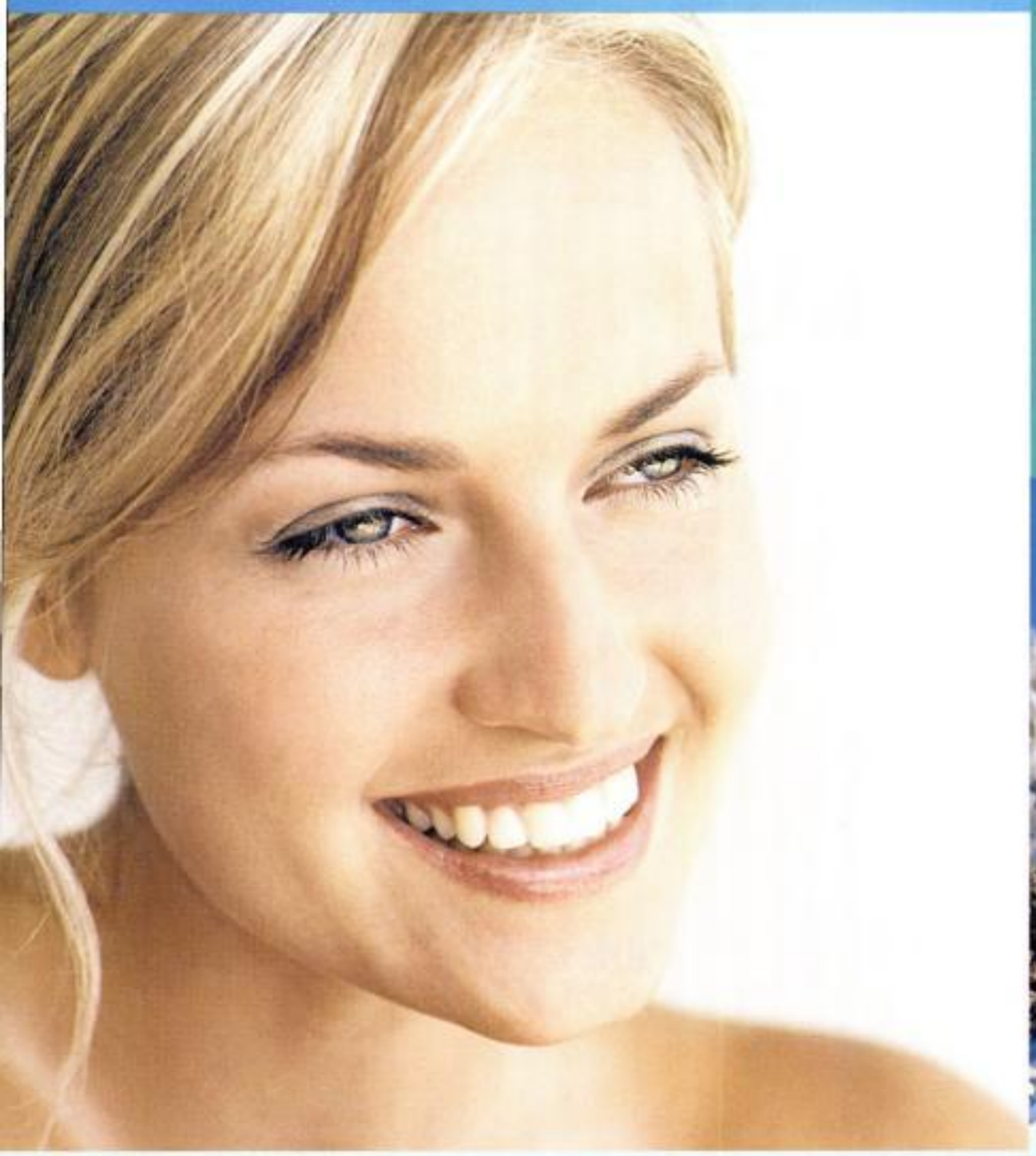

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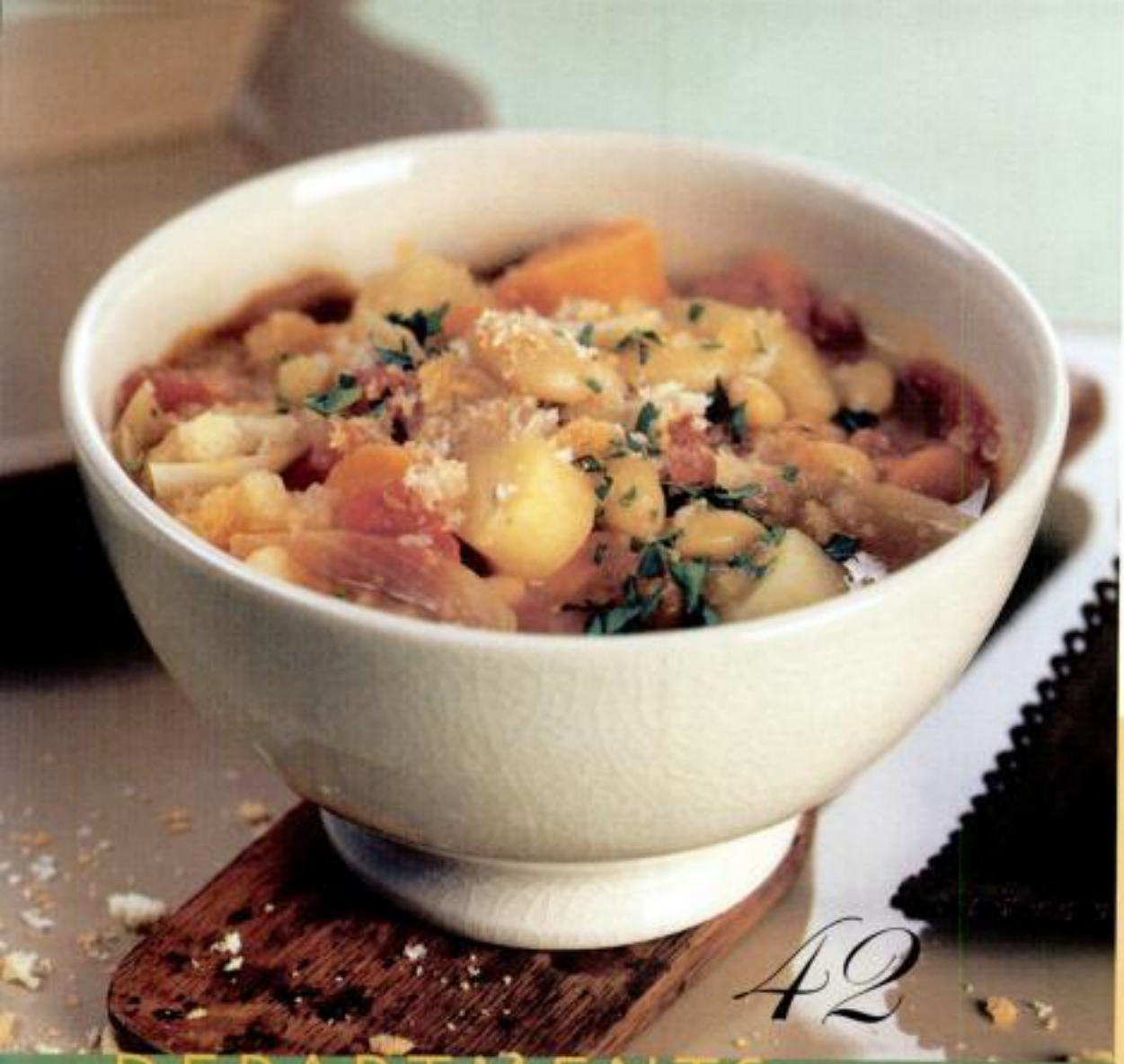

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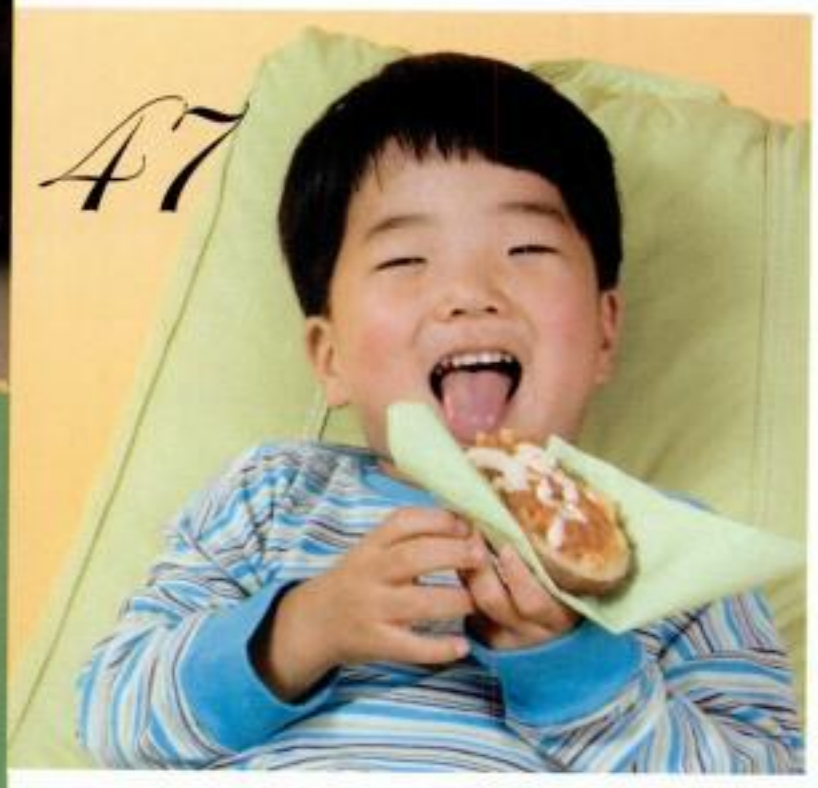
Proof that you just never know. This month, a drag racer drives off with a carrot, while The National Geographic Society rates a big stick



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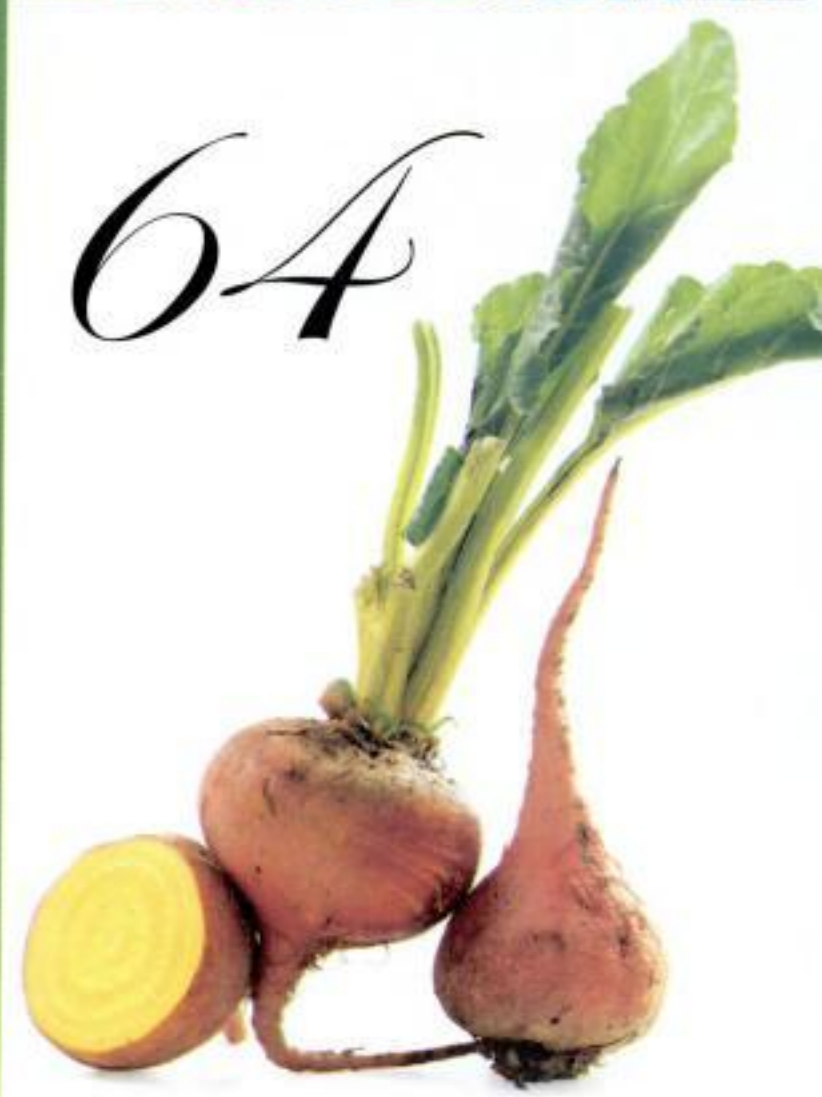

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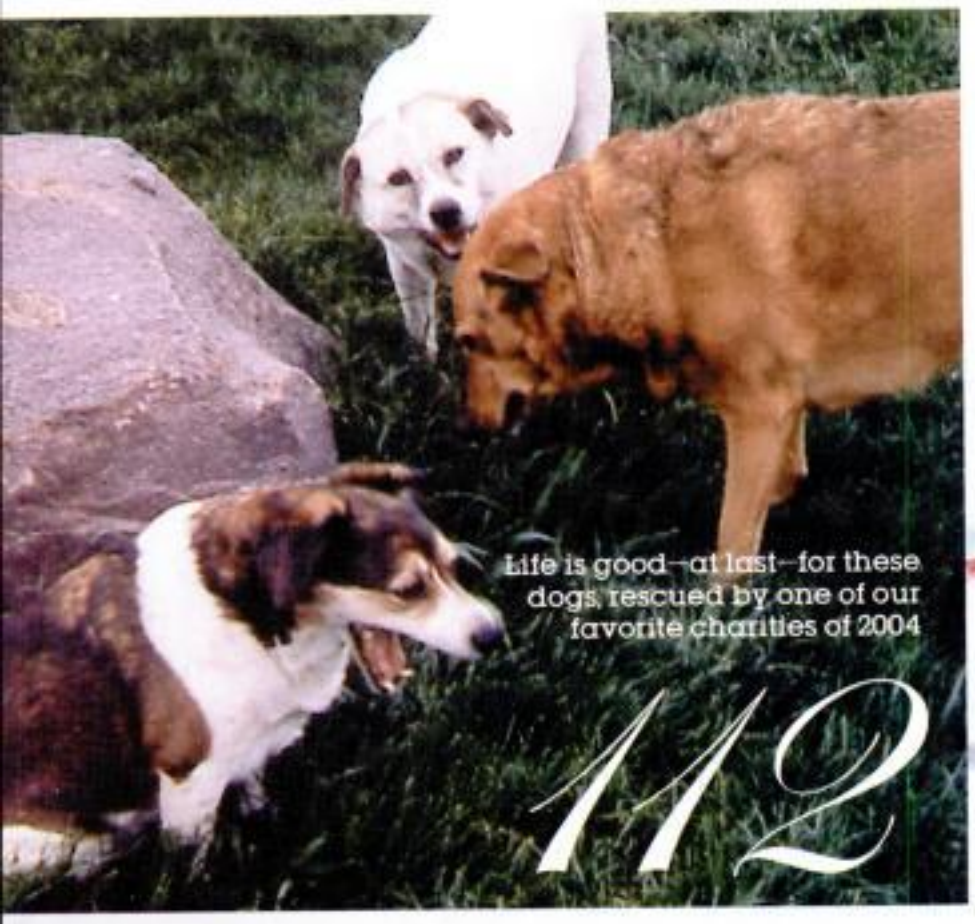

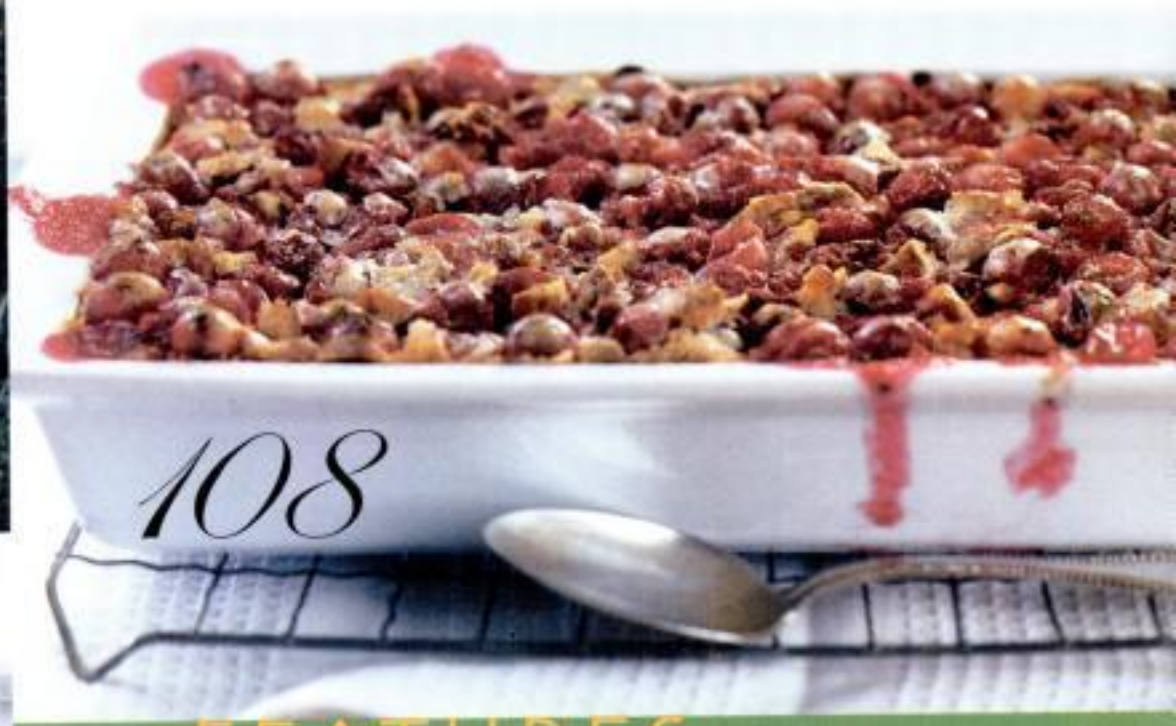

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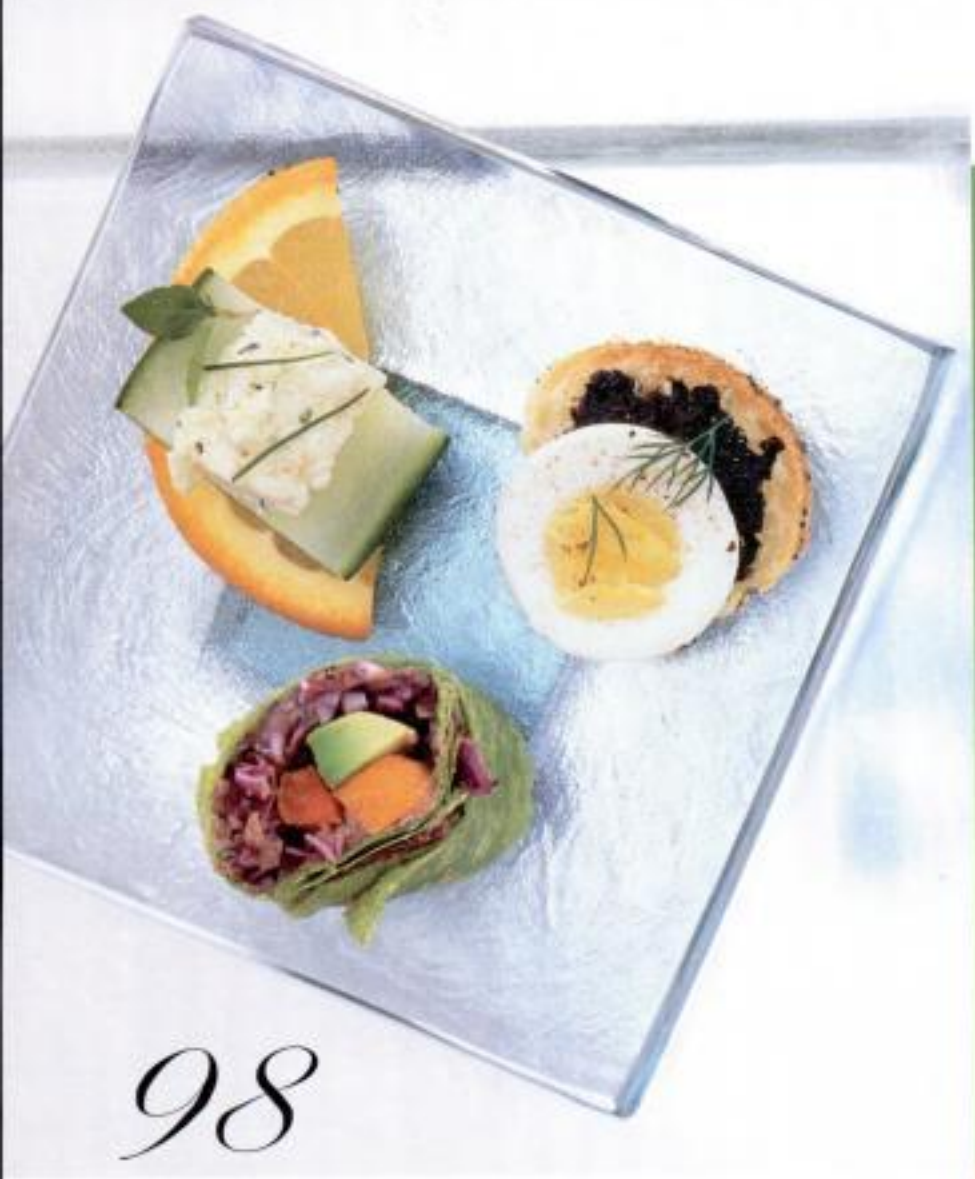

SOME OF THE MOUNTAINS OF PLASTIC-BAGGED TRASH GENERATED BETWEEN NOW AND NEW YEAR'S MIGHT OUTLAST EVEN SAINT PETER'S

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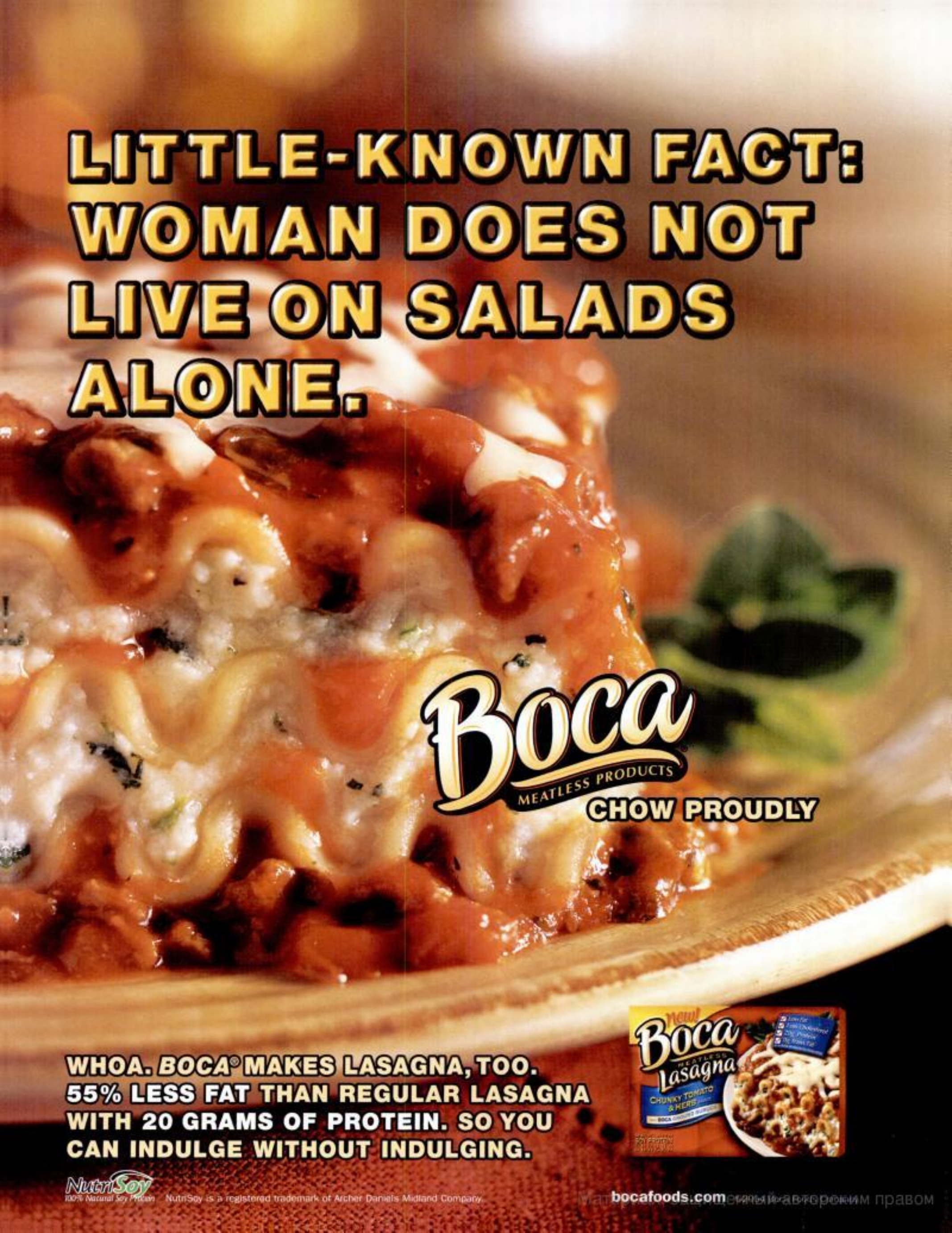
COVER:
Photography by Jacqueline Hopkins
Food styling by Frank Mellodia
Prop styling by Karen Quatroe
Recipe, p. 95



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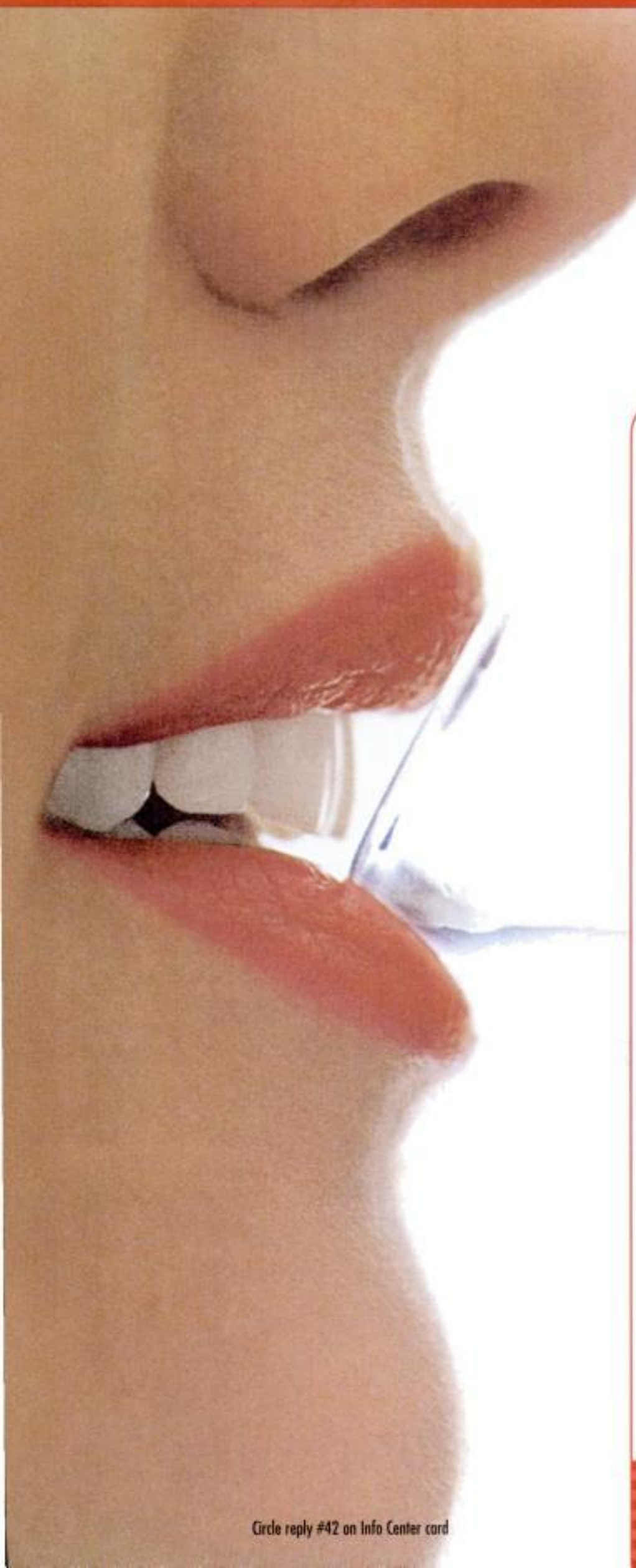
Drink To Your Health & Enjoyment



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Brain Power Pita Pockets

Serves 4

Packed with antioxidants, B vitamins and protein, these pitas will give your brain a midday boost.

Tahini Sauce

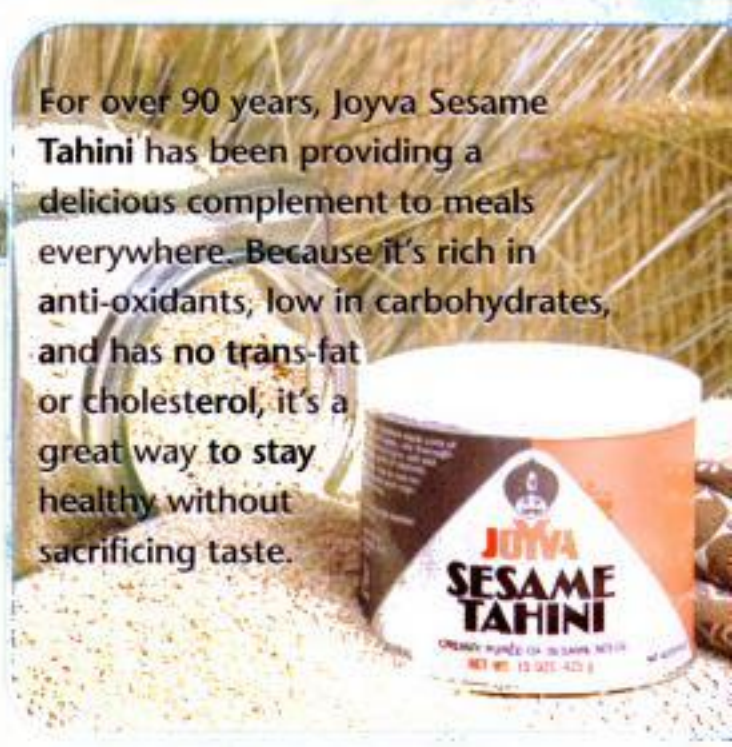
1 cup low-fat or nonfat plain yogurt
2 Tbs. JOYVA SESAME TAHINI
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
Salt to taste

Pita Pockets

4 large whole wheat pita breads
8 oz. soft tofu, well-drained and cubed
4 ripe plum tomatoes, diced
1 cup fresh spinach leaves, torn into bite-sized pieces
1 cup sprouts (alfalfa, sunflower or mung bean)
1 large ripe avocado, halved, pitted, peeled and cut into thin wedges

In a small bowl, mix all sauce ingredients until blended. Slice an edge from each pita bread, and carefully open pockets. In a medium bowl, combine tofu, tomatoes and spinach. Add ¼ cup of sauce, and toss gently to mix. Spoon the mixture into each pocket. Divide sprouts and avocado among the sandwiches. Drizzle each with 1 tablespoon of tahini sauce. Serve right away.

Recipe adapted from *Vegetarian Times*, May 1998.



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big birthdays

Turning 30 isn't everyone's favorite event

It's usually accompanied by bad jokes, dopey birthday cards and an uneasy few minutes standing in front of the mirror, trying to figure out if you suddenly look older.

But not around here. In fact, turning 30 may be one of the best things that ever happened to *VT*. During the year of buildup to this big blowout, the magazine got some new owners who looked at *Vegetarian Times* and said: "Diamond in the rough. Let's lose the rough, polish the facets and put it in a terrific new setting." And then they added, "While we're at it, let's spend some serious time talking to the readers about what they want. Do they think *VT* needs more of this, less of that, a different attitude, even a new name?"

After a whoop of excitement and relief from the staff (with new owners, you never know), all of the above got under way. Fast. Things didn't really come to a boil until last April, and as I write this, it's not quite Labor Day. In magazineland, that's like making a dinner party for 8 in 30 minutes, including turning some fresh flowers into a centerpiece.

In the process, we contacted thousands and thousands of you—many online, some in live groups. We talked to people who'd subscribed forever, people who'd canceled, people who bought a few issues a year, people who occasionally borrowed a friend's copy. We listened to hard-core vegans, moderate vegetarians, relaxed "flexitarians" and people who believe that eating a few vegetarian meals a week is just a healthful, delicious thing to do. And we got an earful, but a remarkably consistent earful. Here's what you asked for, in almost one voice:

- *More pages, and bigger ones.*
- *More recipes, and quicker ones.*
- *More soul and substance—more about our food and water, plants and animals, and about Earth-friendly living. But no lectures, please, and skip the guilt.*
- *Oh, and make it look better—lighter, fresher, more modern. But don't go wild.*

VT *is a handbook for us, and it needs to be really easy to use.*

Hardly crazy requests, but no small thing to do.

It's now 120 days later, and we're *so* excited. We think we've succeeded, but we're dying to know if you agree. Call! Write! Email! We can't wait to hear from you!

Val Weaver

And the editorial staff

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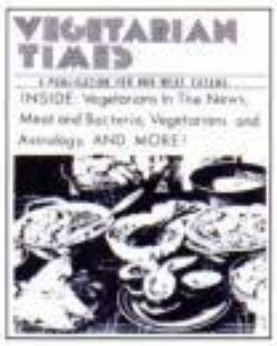

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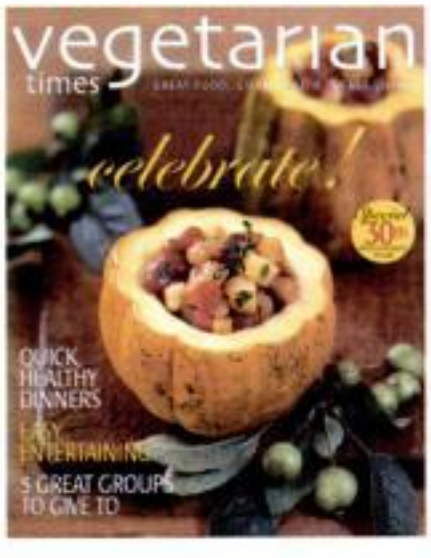

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1/2 cup	organic butter, softened
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2	large organic or farm fresh eggs
1 1/2 tsps.	pure vanilla extract
2 cups	organic rolled oats, finely ground
2 cups	organic white or wheat flour
1/2 tsp.	salt
1 tsp.	baking powder
1 tsp.	baking soda
1/2 cup	organic rolled oats
1 1/2 cups	organic dried apricots, coarsely chopped
2 cups	organic pecans, walnuts or almonds, chopped

Preheat oven to 375° F. and place rack in center position.

Beat butter and shortening with sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in vanilla. Grind oats in a blender or food processor until fine, then combine together with flour, salt, baking powder and baking soda. Gradually stir flour mixture into butter mixture.

Fold oats, apricots and nuts into batter and drop by heaping tablespoons, about 2 inches apart, onto lightly greased baking sheets. Bake 10-12 minutes, or until golden. Cool 2-3 minutes, then remove to a rack to cool thoroughly before serving. Store in an airtight container at room temperature.

Yields approx. 4 dozen large cookies.

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staples CONTRIBUTORS

frank *melodia*

Back to the Kitchen

When Frank Melodia was growing up, his father did the cooking. So it's no surprise that Frank ended up in the food business. After acting in regional theater throughout the United States, he came home to New York, eventually becoming the chef at Café New Amsterdam in Greenwich Village. When it closed in 1985, Frank's career took another turn. He became a food tester/stylist for *Woman's Day, McCall's* and *Rosie*. Preparing *VT*'s simple Thanksgiving dinner (p. 90) meant a refreshing break from the work many food testers do each holiday season. "It was great making something less caloric for a change!"

laura flynn *mccarthy*

Unguilty Pleasures

Each year, when Laura Flynn McCarthy, a former *Vogue* editor, would buy her Christmas tree, she'd feel guilty. "I'd assume that it was wasteful to chop down a tree that would be discarded days later," she says. "I'd feel that the right thing to do, environmentally, was to buy an artificial tree," says the New Hampshire-based writer of "Planet Home" (p. 58). "Now I know Christmas trees are farmed like any crop, and it's better to buy a fresh one and compost it than to buy a fake tree that will end up in a landfill."

dan *imhoff*

Living in Paradise

Environmentalist Dan Imhoff, author of *Paper or Plastic: Searching for Solutions to an Overpackaged World* (excerpted on p. 104), divides his time between his home in California's Sonoma Valley and a 40-acre farm an hour north. "This is where God made paradise—giant redwood country," he says. Dan's farm includes an apple orchard where 125-year-old trees still yield fruit. The apples become cider that he, his wife and two children drink year-round. When he isn't farming, he publishes educational materials through his nonprofit environmental foundation, Watershed Media. "We're just getting started."

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

MOCK "MEATS"?

I use *Vegetarian Times* as a resource for totally vegetarian recipes. Every cookbook has recipes easily adaptable by replacing meat with a meat substitute, but good vegetarian recipes are hard to find. I love a hearty recipe that is original, easy to make and not a mock of some meat eaters' version.
Carol Chapple
Via email

I am not too interested in recipes containing mock meat. Clearly, there is not an ethical issue here, but having been a vegetarian for many years, I have simply lost even the taste for meat. I prefer recipes (including those with soy products) to be flavored by herbs, spices and sauces, not "meat flavor." I think it's a great idea that you are soliciting readers' opinions on this—many people may like the availability of "mock meat," and it certainly offers variety—it just isn't my personal taste.
Catie L. Deines
Via email

I am a vegetarian who loves animals, and I choose not to eat them! I deserted my carnivorous diet several years ago. . . . I love *VT,* but lately I've begun to dislike the increasing number of articles and recipes that include imitation meat products.

Soy products are great natural nutritional sources, but I urge you not to characterize them as meat-like supplements for vegetarians. We are happy with our veggies and tofu!
S.L. Drummond
Via email ▪

SHARE
Reader Recipe

SAVORY MUSHROOM "POPOVER PIE"

Serves 4

Lesa Reitz of Sugar Land, Texas, submitted the recipe for this delicious dish for our 2004 reader recipe contest.

2 cups fresh sliced cremini mushrooms
1 cup thinly sliced or cubed yellow squash
¼ cup diced onion
¾ cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed
½ tsp. dried basil
¼ tsp. dried thyme
¼ tsp. garlic powder
Salt and ground black pepper to taste
1 Tbs. margarine
½ cup all-purpose flour
½ cup skim or low-fat milk
2 large eggs, beaten
½ cup shredded Provolone cheese

1. Preheat oven to 425F.
2. Coat large skillet with nonstick spray, and heat over medium heat until hot. Add mushrooms, squash and onion, and cook, stirring often, until softened, about 8 minutes. Stir in black beans, basil, thyme, garlic powder, salt and pepper, and cook. Cover, and remove from heat.
3. Spray 9-inch deep-dish pie plate with nonstick cooking spray. Add margarine, and heat in oven until margarine has melted. In medium bowl, whisk together flour, milk and eggs.
4. Pour mixture into pie plate, and bake 12 to 15 minutes, or until crust is puffed and brown. Spoon mushroom mixture into crust, and top with cheese. Bake 7 to 10 minutes, until cheese is melted. Serve warm.

PER SERVING: 240 CAL; 15G PROT; 9G TOTAL FAT (4G SAT. FAT); 26G CARB; 120MG CHOL; 230MG SOD; 4G FIBER; 4G SUGARS

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next month

WHAT OR WHO HAS BEEN THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR DECISION TO GO MEATLESS? WHY?

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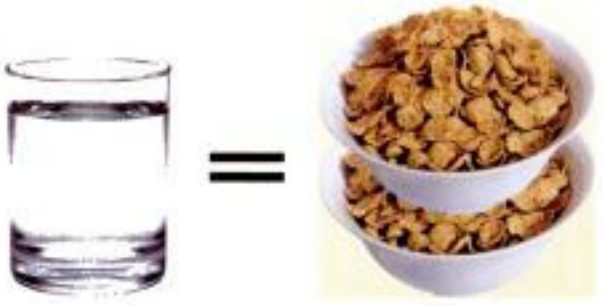

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this just in

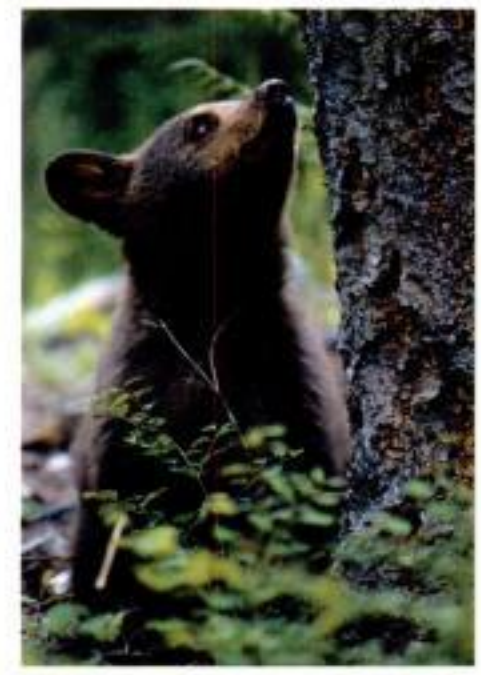
News that's hard to swallow By 2015, more than 2 million people will risk disease and death from poor sanitation and unsafe drinking water, according to the World Health Organization. That's despite goals set at a United Nations–sponsored summit of world leaders designed to halve the number of people who do not have safe drinking water and basic sanitation by then. Poor sanitation can spread diseases such as cholera and diarrhea, which kill three children a minute. Those most vulnerable live in rural and slum areas of fast-growing African and Asian cities. Currently around 2.6 billion people lack access to basic sanitation; 1 billion use unsafe drinking water. The overarching problem: The world population growth appears to be outpacing efforts to improve sanitation facilities.

Another good reason to go veg A diet high in fresh fruits and green vegetables may reduce the risk of endometriosis—a noncancerous growth outside the uterus—by 40 percent. By contrast, a diet rich in red meat can increase the risk by 80–100 percent, report researchers from the University of Milan in the July 15, 2004 issue of *Human Reproduction*.

Get moving Not only is regular exercise late in life good for the body, but it also keeps the mind sharp, making it easier to remember to take pills, follow directions and do other tasks. The key, however, is sticking with the program, say Ohio State University researchers. Study participants who exercised for a time but eventually stopped lost the benefits they gained, says Terrie Wetle, PhD, president of the Gerontological Society of America, deputy director of the National Institute on Aging. "We can get people to exercise," Wetle says. "The biggest challenge is to get them to stick with it." Just like everybody else.

Sodas pack on the pounds Americans' battle with the bulge might be lost over a can of soda or sugar-sweetened fruit drink. These drinks, which many people quaff without considering the calorie cost, are considered a major cause of obesity and are linked to a rise in diabetes. A 2004 study published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* says that these sugary drinks don't fill us up. But because they taste so good, we keep drinking them—and each contains 40–50 grams of sugar. "Before we know it, we've gained 15 pounds a year," says nutritionist Caroline Apovian of Boston Medical Center and Boston University School of Medicine. "Reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption may be our best single opportunity to curb the obesity epidemic." Weight gain was highest among women who upped their sugar-sweetened soda consumption from one drink or less per week to one or more a day. Drinking fruit punches also caused weight gain. Matthias Schulze, of the department of nutrition at Harvard School of Public Health, led the study, which involved tens of thousands of women. (Check out "Is Sugar Really That Bad?" on page 30 for more on why sugary foods—especially sodas—may make us overeat.)

Now, that's a wild concept Tourists—unless they are too unruly—may be helping wild brown bears increase their numbers. Noisy humans can drive big male bears away from their normal feeding zones, which allows mothers and their cubs to eat in peace, say researchers from the



University of Central Lancashire and Utah State University. Because cubs are sometimes killed by the males, more young bears survive. Brown bears, also called grizzly bears or Kodiak bears, can be found in the wilderness and mountains of North America, Asia and Europe. But in the United States, their numbers are dwindling: Fewer than 1,000 brown bears are left, and most of those are found in protected national parks, including Yellowstone. ■

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

this just in

Need-to-know news about your health, diet, mind, body and the world you live in

Bad to the bone? Maybe not The notion that high-protein diets are bad for bones may be nonsense, according to the Tufts University Bone Metabolism Laboratory. Researchers there have found that the excess protein may in fact make bones stronger. Their study, reported in the March 2004 issue of *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, is especially timely considering the popularity of low-carb/high-protein diets. A major protein increase didn't decrease calcium, as the conventional wisdom would have it. Instead, it appeared to slow the normal process by which bones are broken down. The findings do not in themselves support low-carb diets, lead researcher Bess Dawson-Hughes, MD, is quick to point out. "Many nutrients contribute to healthy bones," she says, "and a balanced diet, rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and protein, is one of the best ways to be sure yours are strong."

Breast is still best Here's yet another argument for breast-feeding kids: It may reduce their risk of obesity. Breast milk has been found to contain a protein called adiponectin. Low levels of adiponectin—which affects the metabolizing of sugars and fatty substances—have been linked to obesity as well as type 2 diabetes, insulin resistance and heart disease. Relatively high levels, which breast milk should help boost, may minimize the likelihood of these health problems later on, researchers from the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center told the annual meeting of the Pediatric Academic Societies in San Francisco in May.

Good cooks, bad habits Chefs on TV cooking shows are lousy role models, says a study conducted by Toronto's University of Guelph-Humber, published in the May 2004 issue of *Food Protection Trends*. The researchers found that the chefs didn't wash fruits and vegetables, added ingredients with spoons that had been used for tasting and even used food that had fallen onto the floor. The blunders were made by cooks on TV shows produced in the US, the United Kingdom and Canada. The mistakes are especially troublesome as "numerous studies demonstrate that TV is one of the primary sources" from which North American home cooks learn how to prepare food.

stop!

TV CHEFS DO ABOUT
13 THINGS WRONG
FOR EVERY
1 THEY DO RIGHT

Making the grade, one lunch at a time For serving nutritious lunches and promoting good health in kids, the school systems in San Diego, Detroit and Fairfax County, Virginia, go to the head of the class, according to the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. The nonprofit group analyzed the nutritional quality of elementary school lunches served in districts participating

in the USDA's National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The NSLP serves more than 28 million lunches a day at schools and childcare institutions nationwide. At the bottom of the class: Maryland's Baltimore County earned a "D," and Albuquerque, New Mexico, failed with an "F."

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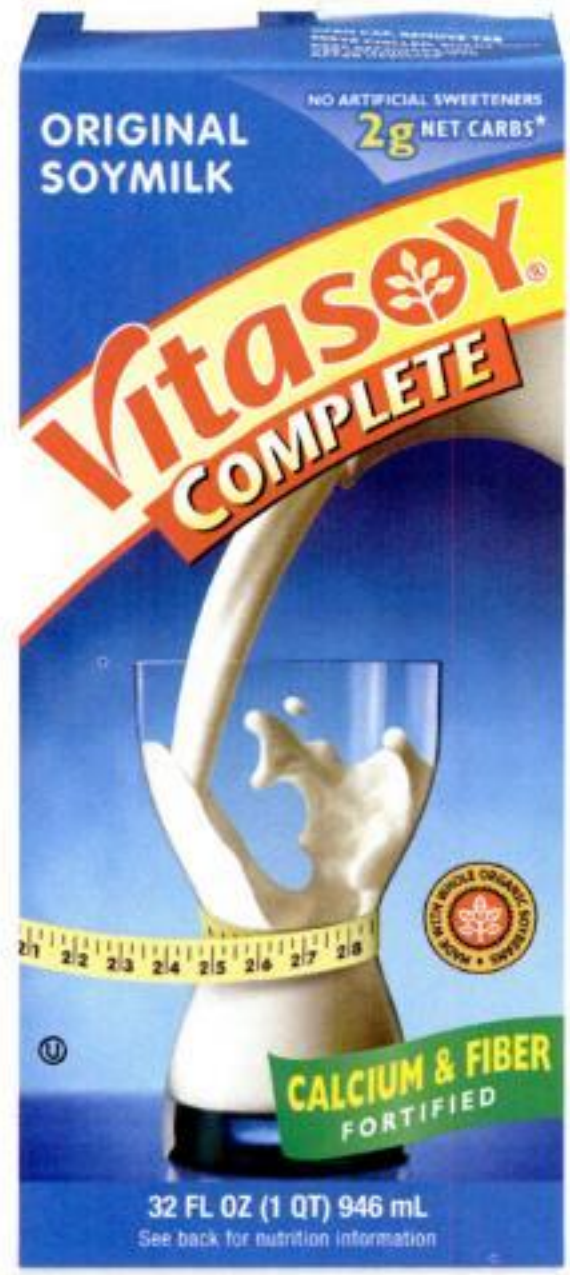

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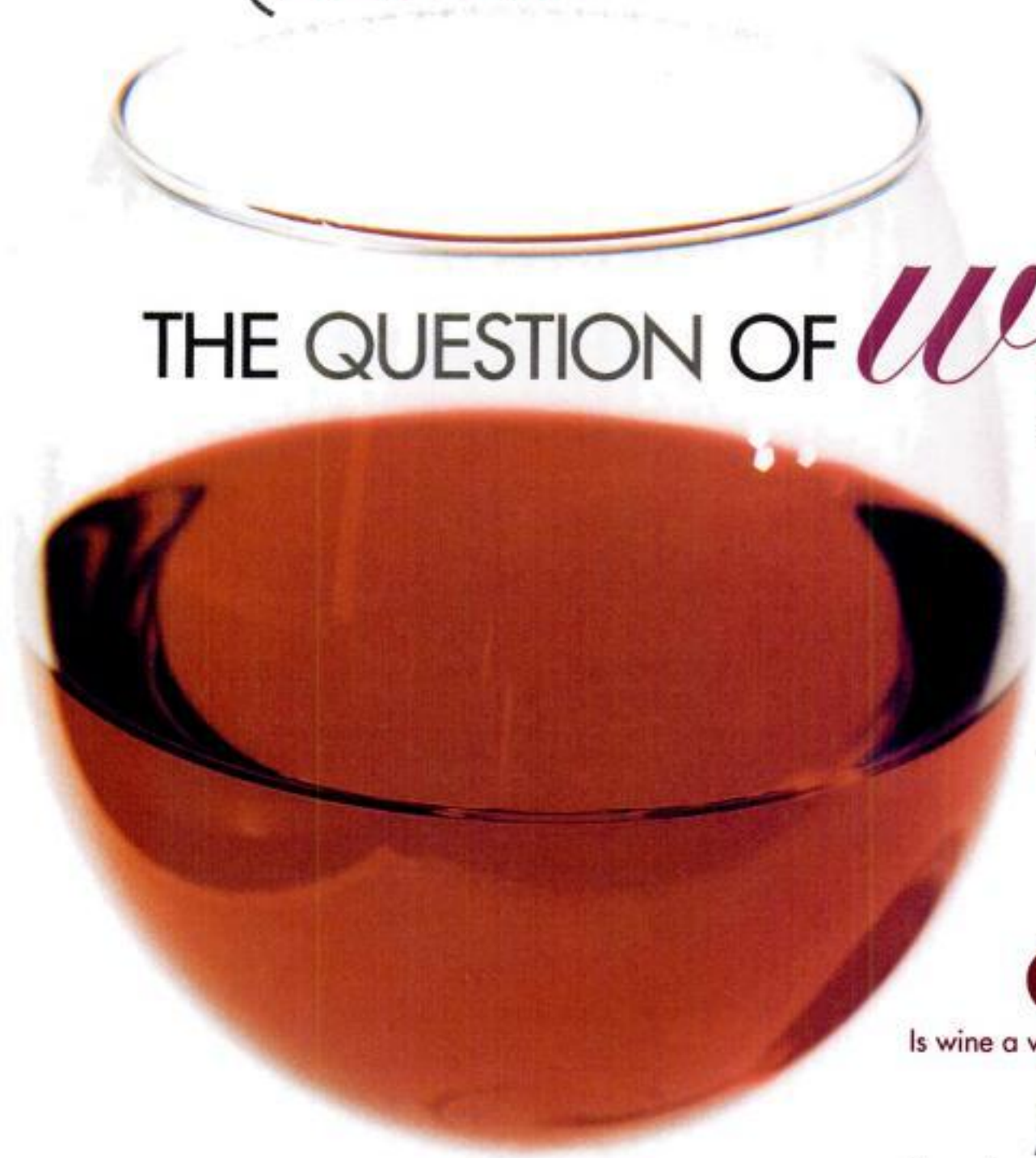
THE QUESTION OF *wine*

BY CARLA DAVIS



OK, ONCE AND FOR ALL: IS WINE REALLY AS GOOD FOR MY BODY AS IT IS FOR MY SPIRITS?

The short answer? Yes. Study after study has shown that a daily glass of wine shrinks the risk of heart disease, strokes, ulcers and some kinds of cancer, not to mention—no surprise here—making stress less stressful and food more delicious.

Q:

Is wine a vegetarian drink?

A:

Yes and no. Wine makers often use animal-derived products to put a final polish on wine. They're called fining agents, and vegetarians are okay with most of these, but vegans are not. Fining agents remove proteins and other suspended materials from wine. Many of these fining agents are earth-based, such as bentonite, a silica clay, but some are animal-based. They include egg whites to "brighten" red wines; a milk protein called casein to make wine taste softer; beef-based gelatin to remove any bitterness; and sturgeon-derived isinglass, which is a clarifier. Most types of fining agents fall to the bottom of wine and are removed before bottling.

Wine makers aren't required to list on their labels which, if any, fining agents were used. So to learn if your favorite vintage has been treated with them, contact the wine maker. A few companies produce vegan wines, including Frey Vineyards (800.760.3739) and Hallcrest Vineyards (800.211.6630). Kosher-certified wines that are American-made can also be animal-free.

"WINE IS THE MOST HEALTHFUL AND MOST HYGIENIC OF BEVERAGES," SAID 19TH-CENTURY CHEMIST LOUIS PASTEUR. 21ST-CENTURY SCIENTISTS TEND TO AGREE. MODERATE WINE CONSUMPTION HAS BEEN FOUND TO REDUCE THE RISK OF LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESSES AND CUT TOTAL CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

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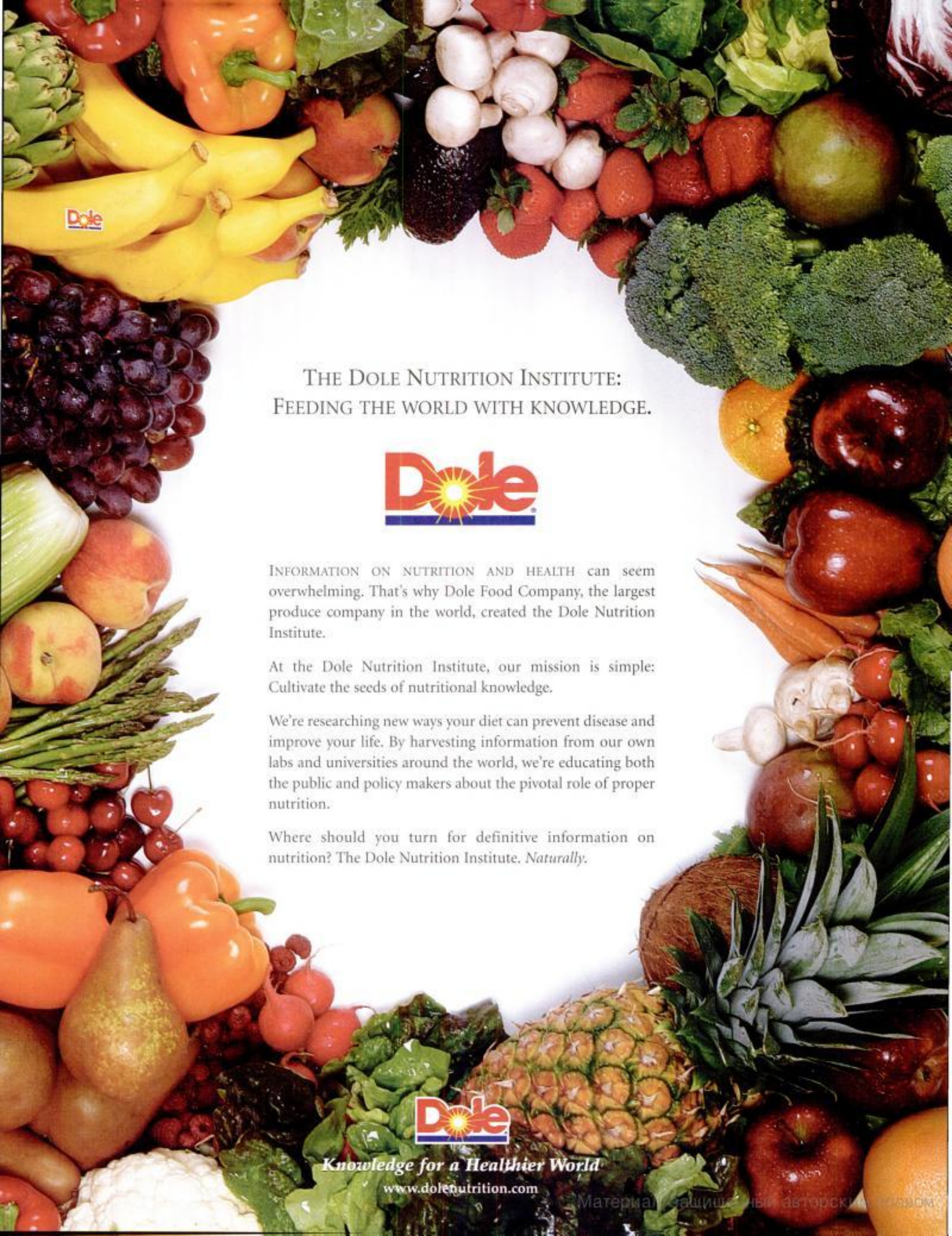

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goods

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REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

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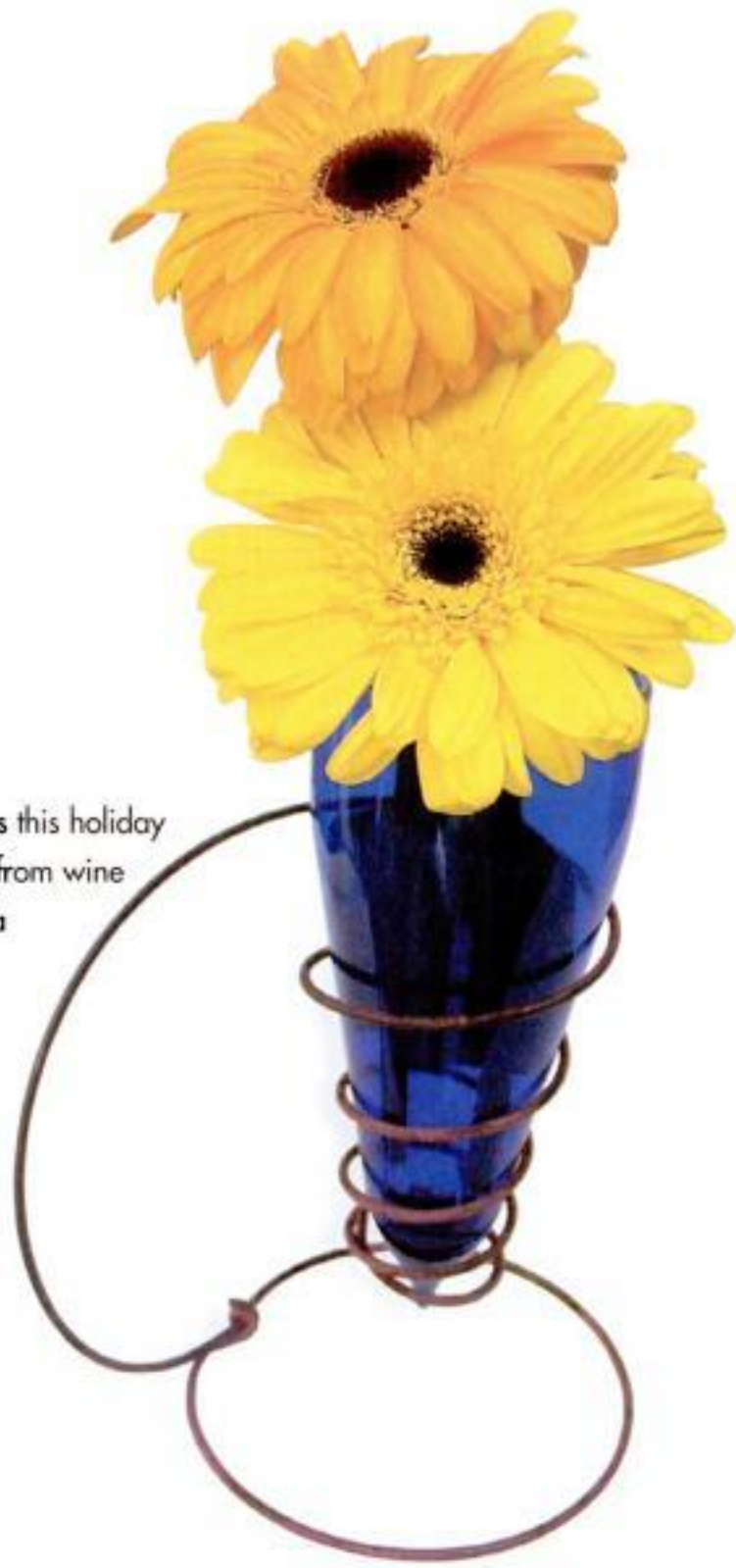

MINI CHOPPER

If you're looking for a food processor that isn't a counter hog, try this slimmed-down model from KitchenAid. It lost inches all over (it's only 7½ inches deep) but kept the processing power of a big machine. Grinning, our tester says, "It's quiet, smooth and way, way better than my blender!" Available in a variety of colors, including this retro yellow, plus holiday red and a great cobalt blue. KitchenAid 5 Cup Little Ultra Power ($119). 800.541.6390; www.kitchenaid.com

4 SMART IDEAS

Good to the Last Noodle

Tired of having all the sauce wind up at the bottom of your pasta bowl? Check out the new rigati (which means "ridged") line from Barilla. The pasta has textured grooves that are designed to hold onto sauces. In spaghetti, fettuccine and bucatini ($0.99/14 oz.). 847.405.7500; www.barilla.com

Spice It Up

Add a little extra punch to your Mexican cooking with Eden's Spicy Refried Beans. They have a more complex flavor than plain refried. In pinto and black bean ($1.79). 888.441.EDEN; www.edenfoods.com

Turkey Friendly

This Thanksgiving, join Farm Sanctuary's Adopt-A-Turkey program. For just $15, you can save a bird from slaughter. The sanctuary rescues a turkey, and your donation provides feed, bedding and veterinary care. You'll also get a year's subscription to the sanctuary's quarterly newsletter, an adoption certificate and a photo (!) of the rescuee. 888.SPONSOR; www.adoptaturkey.org

Every Little Bit Helps

preserve

Using it may be a small step, but here's a toothbrush you can feel environmentally good about. The handle is made from recycled materials (including Stonyfield Farm yogurt cups). And when the bristles get worn, just send it back—postage-paid mailers are available—and the company will recycle the plastic again. From Preserve ($13/4 toothbrushes). 888.354.7296; www.recycline.com

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NO TIME TO BAKE?

No problem. Just dial Dancing Deer. Its fall and winter holiday cookies decorated with natural food coloring are *almost* too pretty to eat. Choose shortbread in snowmen, apples or pumpkins; snow-covered trees; or peppermint rounds ($24.95/ 9 cookies). Round out a holiday buffet with Maple Pumpkin Cranberry Cake ($14.50) or Eggnog Cake with Pecan Swirl ($19.50). 888.699.DEER; www.dancingdeer.com

KNOW A DESERVING COOK?

Give—or get—organic this season (nothing wrong with dropping a hint). This fragrant three-herb wreath is woven from organic rosemary, thyme and bay leaves, then accented with sprays of brilliant red chili peppers. Pluck fresh herbs for cooking until the wreath dries out (you'll barely make a dent), then use the dried herbs all winter long. From Organic Bouquet, about 12 inches wide ($35). 877.899.2468; www.organicbouquet.com

HUNGRY? IN A HURRY?

VT put five new frozen foods to the taste test. Here's what we thought:

Not Just a Garden-Variety Meal

Herb Grilled "Chicken" with Vegetables from Gardenburger. The "chicken" was a bit stringy, but the sauce and veggies tasted fresh and crisp ($3.49). 800.459.7079; www.gardenburger.com

Zesty Veggies

Santa Fe Vegetable Burgers from Vegelicious. Nice flavor, though not Southwest-spicy. We liked them cooked in the oven—crisper and more "burger"-like than in the microwave ($3.49). 800.287.2279; www.vegeliciousfoods.com

Put It in a Pocket, Please

Handi-Pie Heat & Eat Sandwich from Veg Time. These vegan pockets are made with 70 percent organic ingredients. Our fave flavor: Indian Curry. Milder palates might prefer the Thai ($3.99). 415.921.8925; www.vegtime.com

A Microwavable Fiesta

Enchilada Dinners from Amy's. We liked both types: bean-and-cheese and cheese-only. Each has sides of corn or rice and beans; both make a quite satisfying meal ($3.79). 707.578.7188; www.amys.com

For Future Paleontologists

Meatless Chick'n Nuggets from Veggie Patch. We found these a bit plain for our taste—meaning they're probably perfect for most kids. They're easy to make, come in fun dinosaur shapes and go well with sauces ($3.49). 888.MYVEGGIES; www.veggiepatch.com

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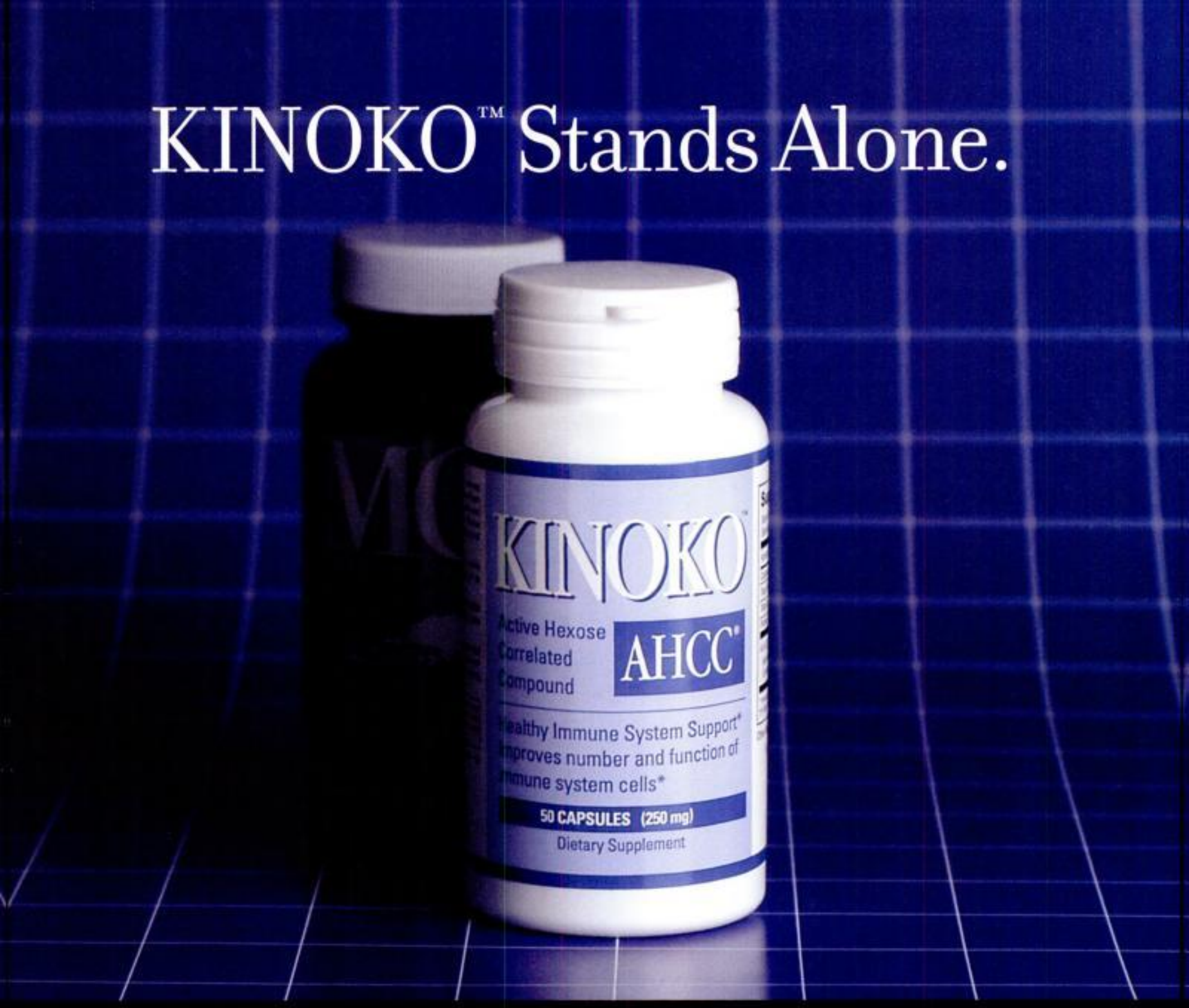

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ASK THE NUTRITIONIST

is sugar

REALLY THAT BAD?

BY KATHERINE TALLMADGE

TO FIND ONE OF THE HEALTHIEST HOLIDAY COOKIES—AND HOW TO MAKE IT—TURN TO PAGE 34

Q:

I keep hearing people knock high-fructose corn syrup when they see it on food labels. What is it exactly? And is it really bad for you?

A:

High-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) is a potent sweetener made from corn starch—it's actually twice as sweet as sugar. Manufacturers began using it as a cheap sugar substitute in the 1970s when the price of sugar shot up. HFCS now accounts for 40 percent of the caloric sweeteners added to foods and drinks, according to a review published in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (*AJCN*) in April 2004.

Americans down about 132 calories' worth of HFCS a day, mainly in sodas and fruit drinks, says Barry Popkin, co-author of the *AJCN* review and a professor in the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. That's a lot. By simply slashing 132 calories daily, you can lose 16 pounds a year without doing anything else.

But calories aren't the real concern with HFCS. This is: It seems to make us pig out in two ways. First, when soda manufacturers switched from sugar to HFCS, they used the same amount, so sodas today are actually much sweeter than they were 30 years ago. Regular exposure to their intense sweetness can make you crave other sweet foods too.

Second, your body metabolizes HFCS differently. Unlike other sweeteners, HFCS doesn't produce a normal rise in insulin after a meal, which prevents the usual levels of a hormone called leptin. Leptin makes you feel full so you stop eating. Too little leptin, says Popkin, and you'll eat too much.

Getting more than 10 percent of your calories from *any* sugary food makes weight control tough. For the average person who should consume about 2,000 calories daily, 10 percent works out to a maximum of 200 calories daily from sweets (about 1 soda).

So while there's nothing inherently "bad" about HFCS in terms of calories or nutrients—it's no better or worse than sugar—eating foods every day that contain it may make the best diet fail. It boils down to the fact that HFCS appears to both make you crave other sweet foods *and* not know when to stop. Now *that's* bad.

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ZERO

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CARBOHYDRATES*,
GLYCEMIC INDEX,
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*net carbohydrates = carbohydrates minus dietary fiber

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Circle reply #30 on Info Center card

Q:

From the first slice of Thanksgiving pie to the last holiday cookie, it's impossible to avoid sweets this season. But are there better choices?

A:

You won't be surprised to hear a nutritionist say that the very best choice is *fruit*. But it's not what most people want around now. If you're doing the baking, try Chewy Meringue Cookies (see recipe, p. 34) or a fruit crisp with lots of whole oats and nuts in the topping. Top with a dollop of yogurt for filling protein. Or try puddings made with soymilk, or milk- and yogurt-based smoothies.

Another option is hot chocolate made with soymilk or fat-free dairy milk. I use 1 cup of milk, 1 teaspoon of cocoa and 1 teaspoon of sugar. It's high in protein, low in artery-clogging saturated fat and full of cocoa, which actually contains some healthful antioxidants.

Q:

I love the holidays, but I dread them, too, because when I start eating sweets, I can't stop. Why?

A:

In my experience, the more sweets you eat (no matter what kind), the more you crave them. But as soon as you cut back—you may have to go cold turkey here and get them out of your house—the cravings ease up and may even disappear. My nutrition clients are always amazed and thrilled when this happens.

There are a couple of reasons for this . . . see the first question for one of them. For another, some sweet foods actually make you hungry. Why? When you eat sugar, your blood glucose surges. Insulin then works hard to bring it down—and fast. But the plummet in blood glucose then increases your appetite. This may be why, after you eat sweets, you want more and more. Sweets also increase the feel-good brain chemical, serotonin.

Q:

When I'm baking holiday treats, is it healthier to use raw sugar or honey instead of refined or powdered sugar?

A:

Darker sweeteners, such as raw sugar, brown sugar or honey, are less processed than lighter, refined sugars. This means they have a marginally higher nutrient content. But all conventional sugars are high in calories and low in nutrients—there's just no getting around it.

GOT A *sweet* TOOTH?

Need another reason to limit sugar-loaded sodas? Women who drink one or more a day are 83 percent more likely to get type 2 diabetes than women who drink less than one a month, reports the August 25, 2004 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

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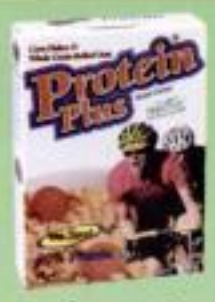

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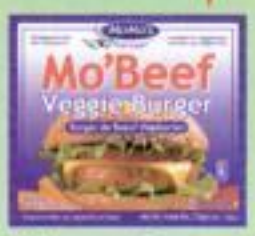
Lunch



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Circle reply #29 on Info Center card

Q:

If you had to pick a cookie from a holiday tray of goodies, which would you choose?

A:

A cookie with as many natural and unrefined ingredients as possible. That means I would pick anything made with a whole grain, such as whole wheat flour or oats. Other good choices include cookies that are high in fruit and nuts or made with egg white, such as this meringue recipe.

recipe

CHEWY MERINGUE COOKIES

Makes 20 cookies

Recipe excerpted from *Diet Simple* (LifeLine Press, 2004).

This recipe has many variations. Instead of one cup of dried fruit, you can use ½ cup fruit and ½ cup mini semisweet chocolate chips (though that adds to the calories)—or, for a low-cal chocolate flavor, simply add a few tablespoons of unsweetened cocoa powder.

3 large egg whites, at room temperature
½ cup confectioners' sugar
1 cup dried peaches, apricots or other dried fruit, chopped into ¼-inch pieces
1 cup sliced almonds or other chopped nuts
1 Tbs. cornstarch
¼ tsp. ground cinnamon, optional

1. Preheat oven to 300F. With electric mixer on medium speed, beat egg whites until foamy. Gradually beat in sugar until meringue forms stiff, yet billowy, glossy peaks. Set aside.
2. Mix dried fruit, nuts, cornstarch and cinnamon, if using, in separate bowl. Fold meringue into nut mixture.
3. Spoon heaping tablespoon-sized dollops onto greased baking sheet or sheet lined with parchment paper (or for ease, use 1½-inch ice cream scoop to drop perfect mounds).
4. Bake 40 minutes, or until meringues are lightly browned, set on outside and spring back when gently pressed in centers.

PER COOKIE: 60 CAL; 2G PROT; 2.5G TOTAL FAT (0G SAT. FAT); 9G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 10MG SOD; 1G FIBER; 6G SUGARS
PER COOKIE WITH CHOCOLATE CHIPS: 70 CAL; 2G PROT; 3.5G TOTAL FAT (1G SAT. FAT); 9G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 10MG SOD; 1G FIBER; 7G SUGARS ■

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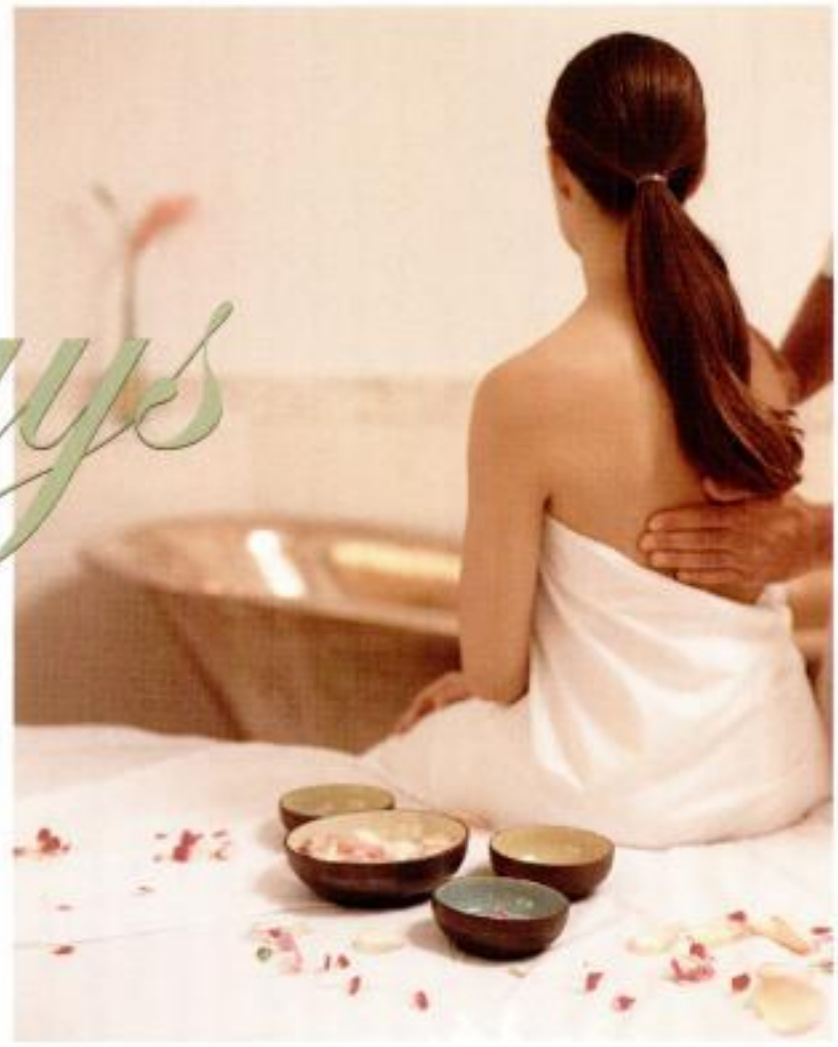
AWAY FROM HOME FOR THE *holidays*

BY MARY MARGARET CHAPPELL

The best present you could give yourself, and your family, between now and New Year's? A quick getaway at a veg-friendly spa



fun

SLEIGH RIDES OUTSIDE, SPA TREATMENTS INSIDE, PLUS GREAT ORGANIC FOOD—THAT'S STOWEFLAKE IN VERMONT

Given all the shopping lists, social obligations and decorating demands that fill the holidays, a spa getaway is probably the last thing on your mind. You might want to make it first. A mid-season day of self-pampering, a post-holiday week of recharging or even a long weekend during the peak festivities—at a veg-friendly resort spa with friends/family along and the cooking and decorating done for you(!)—could make this year unlike any other. Instead of feeling like a limp rag by the end of the holidays, you'll be revved and ready for 2005.

And the take-away benefits are tremendous. "Not only do spas allow for total immersion in feel-good activities, but they also reinforce a healthy lifestyle that can be transferred back to everyday life," says Mary H. Tabacchi, PhD, RD, of Cornell University School of Hotel Administration. In fact, the effects extend long after the last massage stroke, according to a 2004 study done by Tabacchi and the Survey Institute of Cornell University. "We compared 500 spa goers with 500 conventional vacationers, and the statistics were clear as a bell: People who went on spa vacations came back more mentally and physically fit and had a more positive outlook than those who took conventional vacations," she says. Energy, focus and creativity were also up. Tabacchi estimates that the benefits can last up to 6 weeks—a great way to start 2005.

Where to go? *Vegetarian Times* sent out staffers to test three different resort spas—one for every time budget and getaway need. They tried the newest massages, took fitness classes, sampled the menus. Tough duty, we know.

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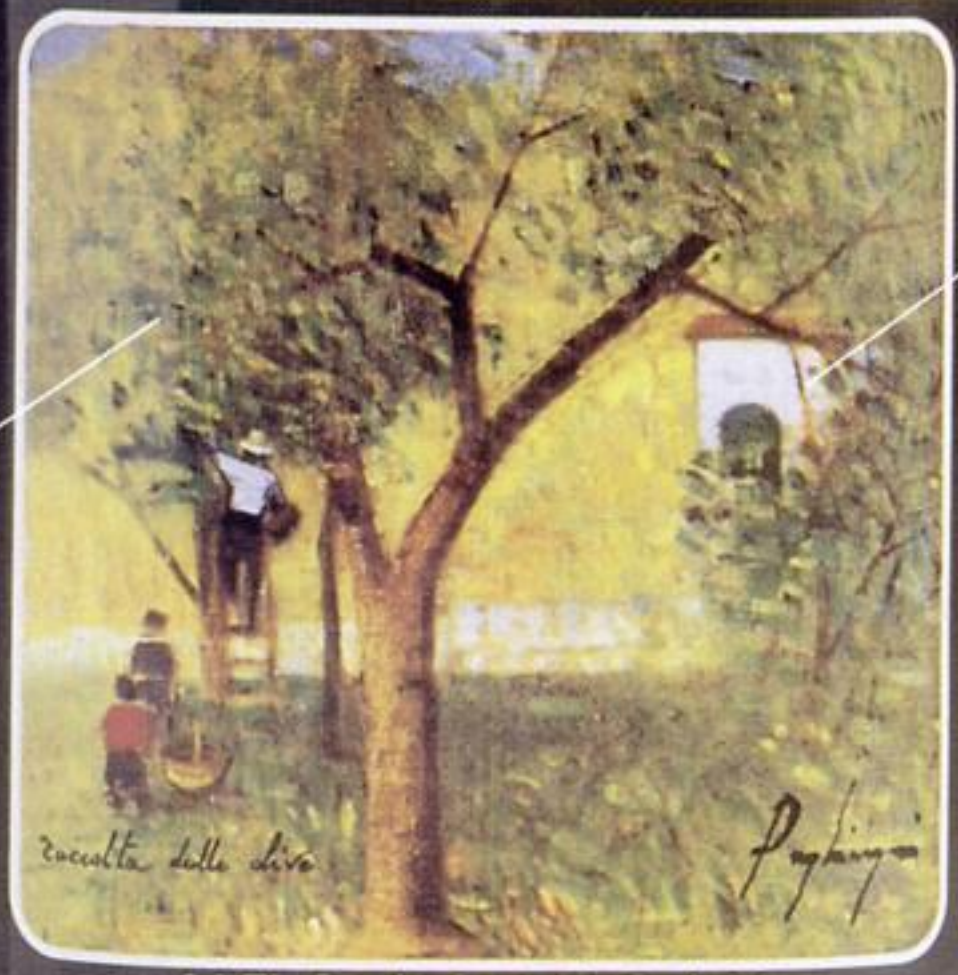

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INDULGE FOR A DAY

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www.sonnenalp.com

VT's design director, Bill McKenney, capped off a fun-but-busy vacation visiting friends with a day of R&R at the Sonnenalp Spa (the name means "sun on the mountains"). To get maximum relaxation in minimum time, he signed up for the Full Day Wellness package ($450), a four-treatment indulgence that includes a muscle-soothing hot stone massage, a body-firming seaweed wrap, a vitamin C facial and a manicure or pedicure. Between treatments, he lazed around in front of a fire and swam in the heated indoor/outdoor pool—an approach that Tabacchi particularly recommends. "That relaxation time is probably worth as much as the treatments," she says.

AMBIANCE Charming getaway in the heart of Vail, just minutes from both the ski slopes and shopping district.

SPA STYLE Traditional European treatments, from Swedish massages to herbal wraps.

Don't miss: The hot stone massage, 80 blissful minutes that melt the stress right off.

FITNESS A full workout center where you can swim, stretch, cycle or clock some time on the treadmill. **Don't miss:** A soak in the hot tub while you gaze up at the mountains and watch the snow drift gently down.

FOOD Colorado cuisine with a French, yet healthful, flair—last year, Chef Jean-Luc Voegele took a 13-week nutrition course. Vegans who plan an extended stay should call in advance so the kitchen can create alternatives.

Don't miss: Pumpkin chowder drizzled with truffle oil, portobello napoleons stuffed with fresh ratatouille and goat cheese, and the holiday stollen.

THE TAB Massages, $120 and up; facials, $75 and up; manicures/pedicures, $70 and up; spa packages—say, a facial, massage, manicure/pedicure and lunch—$300 and up. Rooms (if you can stay longer than a day): double occupancy, with breakfast, $605 and up.

CHECK IN, CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Canyon Ranch
Tucson, Arizona
800.742.9000
www.canyonranch.com

There's just one thing former *VT* staffer Anne Nielsen didn't return home with after her trip to Canyon Ranch: extra pounds. "Even though the food is luscious, and I ate everything I wanted, I didn't gain an ounce," she marvels.

Chalk that up to nutrition guidelines and portion control, plus the focus on fitness and all-around well-being that's the Canyon Ranch mission. Everything about the resort—from the serene cactus-lined walking paths to the brigade of health professionals (a 3-to-1 staff-to-guest ratio)—is designed to renew body and spirit. It's the kind of place where you can't help but get healthier.

AMBIANCE Tranquil, renewing and re-energizing.

SPA STYLE From holistic healing (Ayurveda treatments, Eastern balancing therapies) to traditional (massages, wraps, body scrubs and facials). **Don't miss:** Euphoria, a four-part candlelit experience that starts with a tension-relieving massage, includes a cleansing body mask and a revitalizing bath and ends with a second, restorative massage.

FITNESS Exercise and learning are an integral part of "the Ranch"—there are 50 fitness activities and at least eight lecture classes daily. Wake up with an early morning walk, stretch your mind and body with Tai Chi, hike, bike, have a water massage . . . try it all. **Don't miss:** Aerobic Jam, a get-in-shape dance workout that feels more like getting down than a fitness class.

FOOD A plant-based diet is encouraged at Canyon Ranch, so vegetarians have ample selections, and the kitchen staff will whip up pretty much any request. Plus every dish is calorie-controlled, so you can have a full breakfast, a three-course lunch *and* a three-course dinner and stay within 1,600–1,800 calories a day. **Don't miss:** The marinated tofu, stuffed artichokes and decadent-tasting pecan pie.

THE TAB A 4-night stay including spa fees, services, three meals per day, accommodations and gratuities: $2,400 and up.

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A GETAWAY FOR THE WHOLE GANG

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800.253.2232
www.stoweflake.com

Stoweflake gave *VT* health editor Shane Speer a chance to indulge her passion for fitness and her desire to de-stress. "I was there only 2 days, but it felt like a week," she says.

AMBIANCE Roaring fires, snowy vistas, sleigh-bell coziness.

SPA STYLE State-of-the-art *and* all-natural, the 50,000-square-foot facility features 120 treatments that showcase organic local products. **Don't miss:** The Maple Sugar Body Polish, an 80-minute exfoliating rub-down that leaves skin silken.

FITNESS Classes range from Pilates to ski conditioning. Try a guided snowshoe trek on the 220 miles of cross-country paths. **Don't miss:** Yoga with Andrea, "one of the most helpful and specific yoga instructors I've ever had," Speer says.

FOOD Local, natural, organic—these are executive chef Jeffrey Weiss' mantras. The menus are veg-friendly, and vegan alternatives are available—just let the concierge know your needs at arrival time. **Don't miss:** Ten-bean chili and the cheesecake with blueberry compote, which gets its creamy richness from low-cal tofu.

THE TAB Massages, $65 and up; facials, $95 and up; manicures/pedicures, $35 and up; spa packages, which all include a 50-minute or longer massage, $150 and up. Rooms: 3-day packages from $222 and up. ■

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Look What's On the Menu for Digestion.

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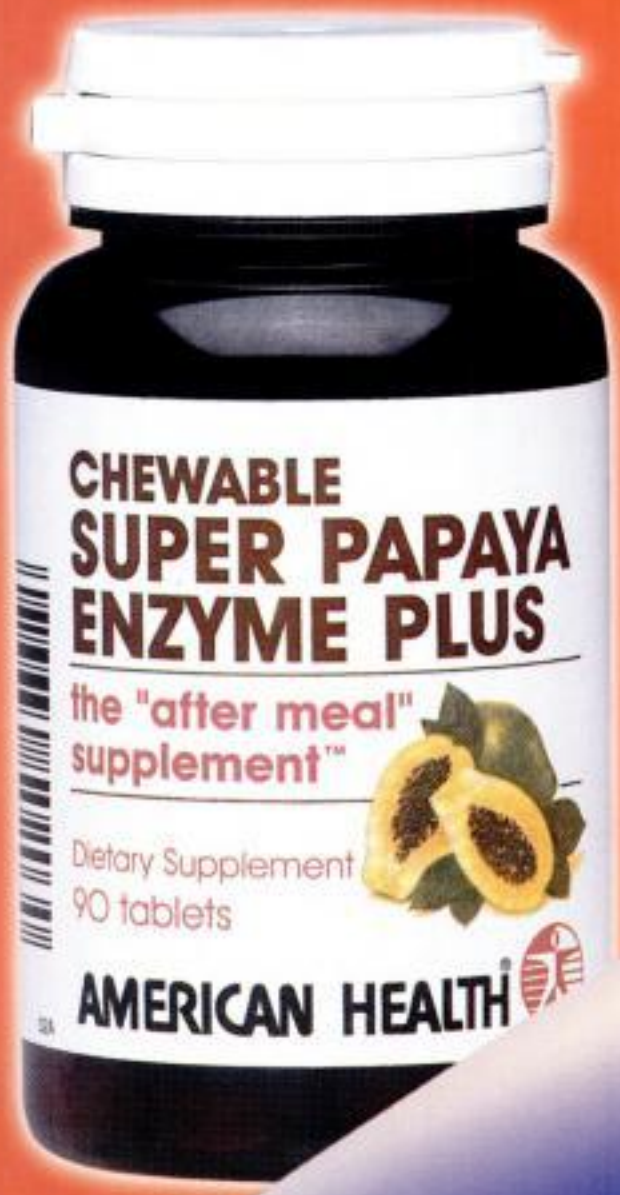

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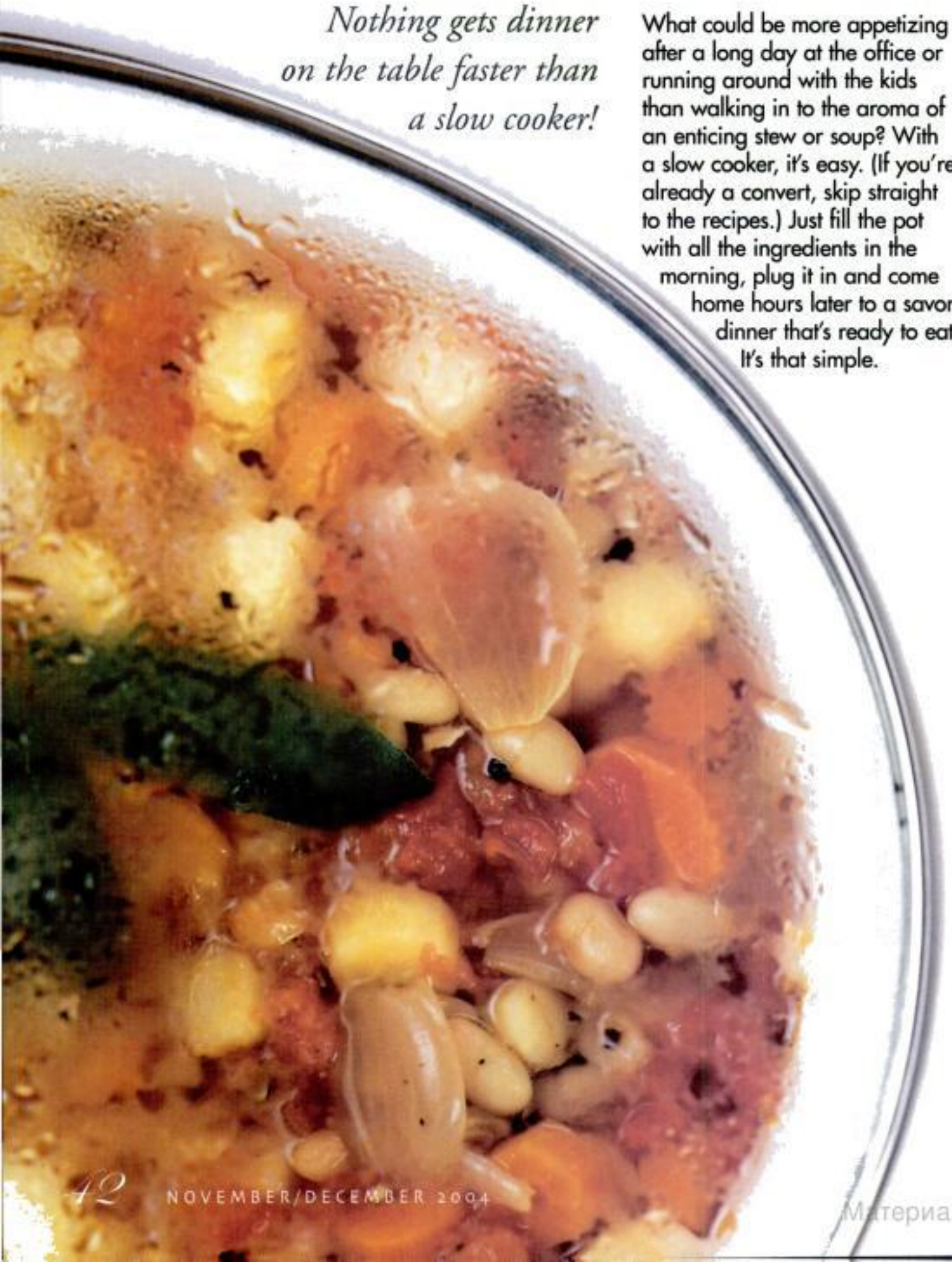
LOW + SLOW = QUICK + *delicious!*

Nothing gets dinner on the table faster than a slow cooker!



What could be more appetizing after a long day at the office or running around with the kids than walking in to the aroma of an enticing stew or soup? With a slow cooker, it's easy. (If you're already a convert, skip straight to the recipes.) Just fill the pot with all the ingredients in the morning, plug it in and come home hours later to a savory dinner that's ready to eat. It's that simple.

Bonus: Foods prepared in slow cookers yield healthful meals. The long, moist cooking retains the natural juices from vegetables rather than boiling them away, so the results are nutritious as well as delicious. And if you're worried that leaving something cooking all day is risky or wasteful, don't be. Slow cookers use a remarkably low, safe amount of electricity—75 to 90 watts, or about what you'd use if you left a radio or a light on all day.

Also, it's no sweat if you get home late. An extra hour or so won't make any difference. Root vegetables, such as carrots, parsnips, beets and celery root, are naturals for slow-cooking. It enhances their inherent sweetness and turns these often underrated vegetables into the stars of the hearty stews, thick soups and cozy braised dishes coming up.

P.S.

NO SLOW COOKER? NO BIGGIE. THERE ARE OTHER COOKING OPTIONS AT THE END OF EACH RECIPE

PHOTOS BY RENÉE COMET. STYLING BY LISA CHERKASKY. PROPS COURTESY OF BALDEQUIN

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

LEMON-GINGER GLAZED BEETS AND CARROTS WITH TOASTED WALNUTS

Serves 4

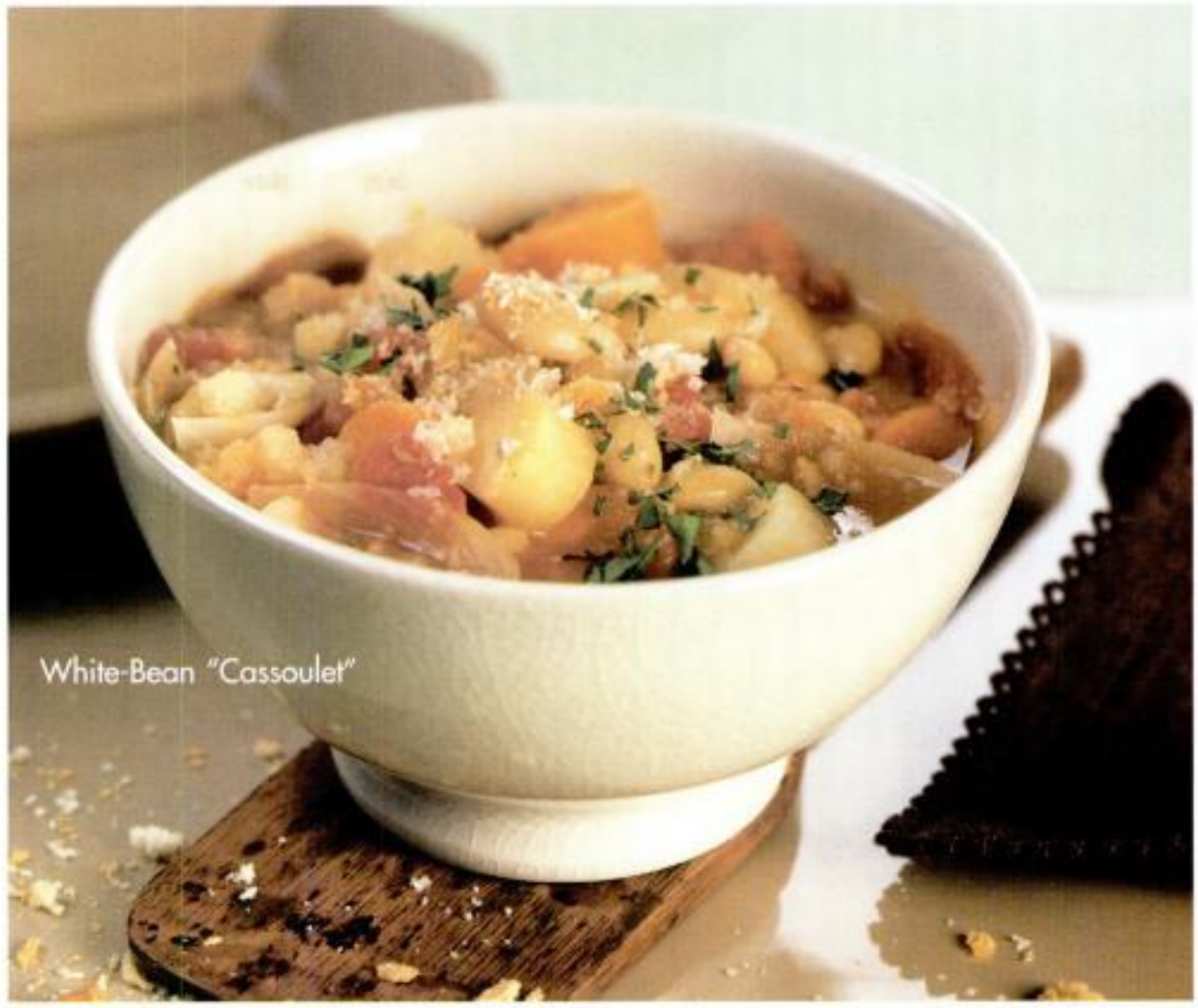
This tasty, colorful recipe can work as a side dish, or it can become a flavorful entrée by adding slices of browned tempeh or soy "sausage" just before serving.

⅓ cup lemon juice
3 Tbs. light brown sugar
1½ tsp. minced fresh ginger
1½ tsp. crystallized ginger, crushed
2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
1½ lb. beets, trimmed, peeled and cut into ½-inch slices
½ lb. carrots, peeled and cut diagonally into ½-inch slices
6 small shallots, peeled and halved
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
¾ cup chopped toasted walnuts

1. Combine lemon juice, brown sugar, both gingers and oil with 3 tablespoons water. Stir well to blend, dissolve sugar and moisten crystallized ginger.
2. Put beets, carrots and shallots in slow cooker, and pour on lemon-ginger mixture, stirring to coat. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Cover, and cook on low until vegetables are soft, 6 to 8 hours. To serve, sprinkle with chopped toasted walnuts.
OVEN METHOD: Prepare lemon-ginger mixture as directed. Preheat oven to 375F. Place beets, carrots and shallots in ovenproof dish; pour on lemon-ginger mixture, stirring to coat. Season with salt and pepper. Cover, and bake until vegetables are tender, 1 to 1½ hours. When ready to serve, sprinkle with chopped toasted walnuts.

PER SERVING: 380 CAL; 10G PROT; 21G TOTAL FAT (2G SAT. FAT); 43G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 190MG SOD; 10G FIBER; 26G SUGARS

THANKS TO Rival, Hamilton Beach, West Bend and Toastmaster & Salton for providing the slow cookers used to test these recipes.


White-Bean "Cassoulet"

WHITE-BEAN "CASSOULET"

Serves 4

In a classic cassoulet, a variety of meats complement the traditional white beans. In this version, a flavorful selection of winter root vegetables takes their place. For a heartier dish, add browned and sliced soy "sausage" links just before serving. Canned white beans make this recipe super-easy to assemble.

1 Tbs. olive oil
4 small shallots, quartered
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 carrots, peeled and sliced into ¼-inch rounds
1 turnip, peeled and chopped
1 parsnip, peeled and sliced into ¼-inch rounds
3 15.5-oz. cans great Northern beans, preferably organic, drained and rinsed
1 14.5-oz. can crushed tomatoes, undrained
1½ cups vegetable stock or water
2 bay leaves
1¼ tsp. dried thyme or savory
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
3 Tbs. toasted breadcrumbs for garnish
1 Tbs. minced fresh parsley for garnish

1. Pour oil into slow cooker, and turn it on high. Add shallots and garlic. Cover, and cook to soften, about 15 to 20 minutes.
2. Add carrots, turnip, parsnip, beans and tomatoes. Stir in stock, bay leaves, thyme, salt and pepper.
3. Reduce heat to low. Cover, and cook until all vegetables are tender, 6 to 8 hours.
4. Remove and discard bay leaves before serving. Garnish with breadcrumbs and minced parsley.
STOVETOP METHOD: Heat oil in 5- to 6-quart Dutch oven or other large pot over medium heat. Add shallots, garlic and carrots. Cover, and cook 5 minutes to soften. Reduce heat to low. Add remaining ingredients, and cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender, 1 to 1½ hours.

PER SERVING: 490 CAL; 26G PROT; 5G TOTAL FAT (1G SAT. FAT); 88G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 260MG SOD; 21G FIBER; 7G SUGARS

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MAIN-DISH LENTIL-VEGETABLE SOUP

Serves 4

This flavorful soup with its protein-rich lentils is substantial enough to enjoy as a main dish. One note: Even though most lentils today are picked clean, sort through them just in case to remove any debris.

If you're pinched for time, skip the initial sauté that starts the soup; however, those few extra minutes (and the 1 extra pan it takes) greatly enhance the overall flavor. To add some greens with no extra cooking, chop some baby spinach, and stir it in just before serving. The heat from the soup will just wilt the spinach.

1 Tbs. olive oil
1 medium-sized yellow onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 to 3 carrots, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice
1 parsnip, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice
1 small celery root, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice
1¼ cups dried brown lentils, sorted and rinsed
6 cups vegetable stock or water
1 Tbs. tamari soy sauce
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Minced fresh parsley for garnish

1. Heat oil in skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic, cover and cook until softened, about 5 minutes; transfer to slow cooker.
2. Add carrots, parsnip, celery root, lentils, stock, tamari, salt and pepper. Cover, and cook on low until lentils and vegetables are tender, 6 to 8 hours. To serve, adjust seasonings to taste, and garnish with fresh parsley.

STOVETOP METHOD: Heat oil in a 5- to 6-quart pot over medium heat. Add onion and garlic. Cover, and cook 5 minutes to soften. Add carrots, parsnip, celery root, lentils, stock, tamari, salt and pepper. Reduce heat to low. Cover, and cook, stirring from time to time, until lentils and vegetables are tender, 1 to 1½ hours. Taste and adjust seasonings, if necessary. Garnish with parsley, and serve.

PER SERVING: 360 CAL; 19G PROT; 4.5G TOTAL FAT (0.5G SAT. FAT); 65G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 900MG SOD; 19G FIBER; 12G SUGARS

fast SLOW COOKING

All slow cookers are not created equal—especially where cooking times are concerned. Some brands and models cook a bit faster than others because their temperature gauge is set higher (hotter) overall. So when directions say "cook 6 to 8 hours on low," some cookers may get the job done in as little as 4 hours.

With that in mind, use the suggested times as a guide. If you've used your slow cooker a lot, you already know whether it runs a little hot. But if you're new to this, track the actual cooking lengths the first few times you use it. Chances are, you'll begin to see a pattern and can correctly estimate times after that.

Материал, защищенный авторским правом

HEARTY WINTER VEGETABLE STEW

Serves 4

If you like, the rich broth this recipe produces naturally can be made even thicker right in the pot. Just before you're ready to serve the stew, mash one or two of the potatoes against the cooker's side, and blend them into the broth.

To enjoy "pot roast" with these vegetables, add chunks of seitan at any time during cooking. If you like Brussels sprouts, they make a colorful addition—just trim and halve 8 ounces of sprouts, and include them when you add the rest of the vegetables.

2 Tbs. olive oil
4 to 6 small shallots, peeled and halved
8 oz. baby carrots
1 lb. small new potatoes, well scrubbed and cut in half if larger than 1½ inches
2 turnips or 1 small rutabaga, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
2 cloves garlic, crushed
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1½ cups vegetable stock
¼ cup dry red or white wine
1 Tbs. tamari soy sauce
1½ tsp. dried thyme, sage, or savory, or a mix of all three

1. Oil bottom of slow cooker with 1 tablespoon oil. Add shallots, carrots, potatoes, turnips and garlic, and toss to coat with oil.
2. Add salt, pepper, stock, wine, tamari and herbs. Drizzle with remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Do not stir.
3. Cover slow cooker, and set on low; cook until all vegetables are tender, 6 to 8 hours.
STOVETOP METHOD: Heat all oil in 5- to 6-quart Dutch oven or other large pot over medium heat. Add all remaining ingredients. Reduce heat to low. Cover pot, and cook, stirring contents occasionally, until all vegetables are tender, 1 to 1½ hours.

PER SERVING: 240 CAL; 5G PROT; 7G TOTAL FAT (1G SAT. FAT); 39G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 940MG SOD; 6G FIBER; 10G SUGARS ■

cold STARTS

Not only do some slow cookers run a little hotter than others (see box, opposite), but there are two other variables that may affect the cooking time. One is the size of the ingredient pieces—bigger chunks take a little longer to cook through. The other is the temperature of the food you put into the cooker. If the ingredients are cold when you start, they will take longer to cook than if they're at room temperature. If both the food and the cooker insert are cold (which happens if you assemble a recipe in the cooker "pot" the night before and refrigerate it until the next morning), the cooking time will be longer still. In such instances, factor in an extra 30 to 45 minutes of cooking.

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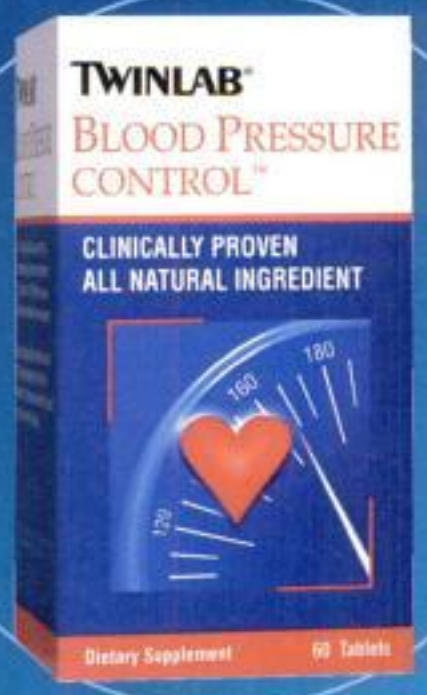

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GETTING *sneaky*

BY NAVA ATLAS

SOMETIMES, STEALTH IS NEEDED TO DISH OUT GOOD NUTRITION

Vegetarian kids don't necessarily have a built-in love for wholesome foods. When my two lifelong vegetarian sons were young, they were at least as picky as the next kid. Subterfuge worked far better than wheedling or bribery for getting nutritious foods off the plate and into willing mouths. These are some of my more successful strategies:

Bake in goodness: Homemade treats can be packed with nourishing ingredients rather than empty calories. Using whole wheat pastry flour instead of unbleached white boosts fiber without compromising flavor and texture. Shredded zucchini, chopped fruits, ground nuts and puréed pumpkin meet no resistance when baked into delicious muffins, cakes or quick breads.

Disguise it: Here's the ultimate subterfuge—turn high-nutrient veggies (broccoli, cauliflower, squash, greens) into purées. Then make them vanish. Astonishing amounts can disappear into a soothing soup or pasta sauce. Puréed silken tofu adds soy goodness to soups, sauces and smoothies.

PIZZA POTATOES

Serves 4
30 minutes or fewer

I've made these for my sons for years—like most kids, they love that tomato sauce-mozzarella synergy. But recently I've started sneaking in extra veggies. The kids still love these "pizzas." Use leftover sauce on pasta the next day.

4 medium-large baking potatoes
1½ to 2 cups small broccoli florets
2 medium-sized carrots, thinly sliced
1 16-oz. jar natural pizza sauce
1 cup grated mozzarella or mozzarella-style nondairy cheese
Dried oregano, optional

1. Bake potatoes in microwave.
2. Steam vegetables in one saucepan until just tender. Drain. Put in food processor with pizza sauce; purée until very smooth.
3. Cut potatoes in half lengthwise; arrange face up in heatproof dish. Fluff with fork; spoon on as much sauce as each will hold. Spread ⅓ cup cheese on each; add dash of oregano, if using. Microwave about 3 minutes, or until cheese melts.

PER SERVING: 470 CAL; 17G PROT; 6G TOTAL FAT (3G SAT. FAT);89G CARB; 15MG CHOL; 530MG SOD; 11G FIBER; 11G SUGARS ■

tip

PURÉE FOODS KIDS DON'T LIKE, THEN STIR SMALL AMOUNTS INTO FOODS THEY LOVE, LIKE PIZZA SAUCE

Материал защищенный авторским

30 minutes

Fast, fresh fall fare that's perfect for people on the run

In our modern world, where everyone moves in overdrive, home cooks rely on meals that can get to the table fast. But there's no reason to forgo flavor for speed. These quick-time recipes produce meals in minutes that are packed with taste. From tempting pecan pancakes—a bright start to any morning—to a gingery stir-fry with noodles, there's not a bland bite in sight.

dig in

NUTTY PANCAKES

CHEESE-AND-GREENS MELT

SWEET POTATO HASH

OODLES OF GINGERY NOODLES

APPLE-POTATO-"SAUSAGE" SAUTÉ

SPINACH-TEMPEH QUESADILLAS

NUTTY PANCAKES

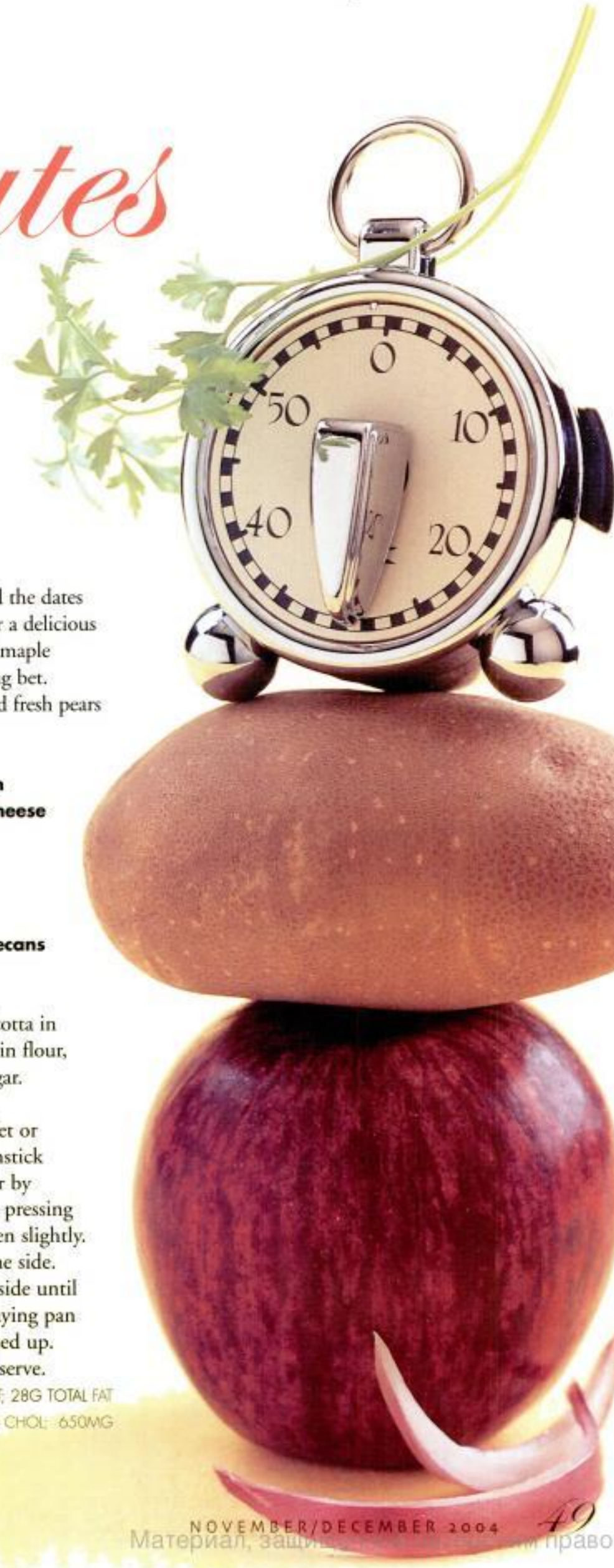
Serves 4
30 minutes or fewer

The pecans add texture, and the dates add nuggets of sweetness for a delicious fall breakfast dish. Warmed maple syrup is your best garnishing bet. Accompany these with sliced fresh pears or apples, and herbal tea.

2 large eggs, well beaten
1½ cups low-fat ricotta cheese
½ cup all-purpose flour
½ tsp. salt
2 tsp. baking powder
1 Tbs. sugar
1 cup toasted, crushed pecans
½ cup chopped dates

1. Stir together eggs and ricotta in large mixing bowl, and stir in flour, salt, baking powder and sugar. Fold in pecans and dates.
2. Heat large nonstick skillet or griddle, and spray with nonstick cooking spray. Spoon batter by ⅓ cupfuls onto hot surface, pressing lightly with spatula to flatten slightly. Cook 3 to 5 minutes on one side. Turn, and cook on second side until golden brown. Repeat, spraying pan as needed, until batter is used up.
3. Remove from heat, and serve.

PER SERVING: 470 CAL; 16G PROT; 28G TOTAL FAT (5G SAT. FAT); 41G CARB; 130MG CHOL; 650MG SOD; 5G FIBER; 23G SUGARS



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CHEESE-AND-GREENS MELT

Serves 6
30 minutes or fewer

This sturdy dish combines fall's hearty greens with a creamy cheese sauce to form a complete meal. Try it with heated Italian focaccia bread, and stewed fruits for dessert.

1 bunch mustard greens, trimmed and rinsed
1 bunch chard, trimmed and rinsed
1 Tbs. vegetable oil
2 cups cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
1 Tbs. minced garlic
½ cup sunflower seeds
½ cup soy "bacon" bits
1 12.3-oz. silken soft tofu
½ cup unflavored soymilk
1 7-oz. pkg. shredded soy cheddar cheese
1 sweet red pepper, diced, for garnish

1. Put greens into large saucepan, leaving rinse water on leaves. Cover, and steam over medium heat until completely wilted. Using tongs, put greens into colander. Drain, squeeze out excess water with hands and chop coarsely.
2. Heat oil in large skillet, and sauté beans and garlic 5 minutes. Add sunflower seeds, "bacon" bits and greens. Cook 5 minutes more.
3. Put tofu and soymilk in blender, and purée until smooth. Pour into saucepan, add cheese and heat until cheese melts.
4. Put greens mixture on individual plates, top with cheese sauce and garnish with diced red pepper.

PER SERVING: 370 CAL; 27G PROT; 16G TOTAL FAT (1G SAT. FAT); 33G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 1,130MG SOD; 10G FIBER; 4G SUGARS

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SWEET POTATO HASH

Serves 4
30 minutes or fewer

A colorful fall dish, this mixture has a sweet accent from the dried fruit. It makes a perfect brunch or casual supper dish. Add a tart green salad as an accompaniment, and conclude with a light citrus sorbet.

2½ Tbs. vegetable oil
2 sweet potatoes, unpeeled and cubed
1 sweet onion, diced
1 green bell pepper, seeded and diced
8 oz. crumbled soy "sausage"
1 cup egg substitute, beaten
½ cup raisins, dried cherries or dried cranberries
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

1. Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat, and sauté potatoes about 5 minutes. Add onion and green pepper, and sauté about 7 minutes more. Remove vegetables from skillet.
2. Heat remaining ½ tablespoon oil in skillet over medium-low heat; add crumbled "sausage" and brown, about 3 minutes. Return vegetables to pan, and stir in egg substitute, dried fruit, salt and pepper. Cook until egg substitue firms, and serve hot.

PER SERVING: 350 CAL; 20G PROT; 15G TOTAL FAT (1G SAT. FAT); 35G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 380MG SOD; 5G FIBER; 14G SUGARS

OODLES OF GINGERY NOODLES

Serves 4
30 minutes or fewer

Nothing beats good eating like a quick stir-fry, and this gingery concoction is a winner. Chilled Asian beer and ice cream round out the meal.

1 8-oz. pkg. somen noodles
1½ Tbs. vegetable oil
8 oz. extra-firm tofu, cubed
1 Tbs. grated fresh ginger
1 Tbs. minced garlic
2 bunches watercress, trimmed
2 Tbs. cornstarch mixed with 3 Tbs. water
4 Tbs. low-sodium soy sauce
3 Tbs. hoisin sauce
2 Tbs. sesame seeds as garnish
1 Tbs. sesame oil as garnish

1. Heat large pot of water to boiling, and cook noodles according to package directions. Drain, and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, heat oil in large skillet or wok over medium heat. Stir-fry tofu until golden, about 7 minutes. Add ginger and garlic, and stir-fry 2 minutes. Add watercress, cornstarch mixture, soy sauce, and hoisin sauce. Cover, and steam 3 minutes, or until watercress wilts and sauce thickens.
3. Stir noodles into tofu mixture, and stir-fry 2 minutes. Put in serving dish; garnish with sesame seeds and drizzles of sesame oil.

PER SERVING: 490 CAL; 17G PROT; 13G TOTAL FAT (1.5G SAT. FAT); 75G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 1,000MG SOD; 5G FIBER; 2G SUGARS

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Apple-Potato-and-"Sausage" Sauté

APPLE-POTATO-"SAUSAGE" SAUTÉ

Serves 4
30 minutes or fewer

A hearty breakfast or light supper, this sauté mixes three complementary flavors. Use vivid red or green apples, and leave them unpeeled to add color to the mix.

2 Tbs. plus 2 tsp. vegetable oil
1 lb. small potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 onion, diced
2 large apples, unpeeled and thinly sliced
1 6-oz. pkg. soy "sausage" links, cut into thirds
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
¼ cup shredded cheddar for garnish
¼ cup snipped parsley for garnish

1. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in large skillet over medium heat. Sauté potatoes about 7 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon oil to skillet, and sauté onion with potatoes about 5 minutes or until golden. Remove potatoes and onion, and set aside.
2. Add remaining 2 teaspoons oil to skillet, and sauté apples over medium heat about 5 minutes, stirring to prevent burning. Spray separate skillet with nonstick cooking spray; brown "sausage" links.
3. Add all ingredients to skillet of hot apples; stir well to heat through. Sprinkle with cheese and parsley, and serve.
PER SERVING: 360 CAL; 13G PROT; 15G TOTAL FAT (2.5G SAT. FAT); 44G CARB; 5MG CHOL; 250MG SOD; 7G FIBER; 15G SUGARS

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SPINACH-TEMPEH QUESADILLAS

Serves 6
30 minutes or fewer

If you like things spicy, you can kick up the heat in this recipe by using a picante salsa and adding some chopped jalapeños to the mixture. If you use a large skillet or griddle, you can cook more than 2 quesadillas at a time. Offer scoops of guacamole served on leaf lettuce as a side dish, and pass fresh fruit with cookies for dessert.

1 Tbs. vegetable oil
8 oz. tempeh, cubed
2 tomatillos, diced
1 lb. spinach, trimmed and rinsed
2 cups salsa, ½ with tempeh mixture
6 8- or 9-inch whole wheat tortillas
1 7-oz. pkg. cheddar soy cheese

1. Heat oil in large skillet, and sauté cubed tempeh and tomatillos for 5 to 8 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, put freshly washed spinach into large saucepan, leaving rinse water on leaves. Cover pot, and steam over medium heat until spinach is completely wilted, about 5 minutes.
3. Preheat broiler.
4. Stir salsa into tempeh mixture, and continue cooking until heated through, about 2 minutes. Put 1 tortilla flat on work surface, and scoop about ⅓ cup tempeh filling over lower half of tortilla. Sprinkle with about 2 tablespoons cheese; fold top over filling. Repeat with remaining tempeh mixture until all tortillas are filled.
5. Spray nonstick skillet with nonstick cooking spray, and heat over medium heat. Add folded tortillas (as many as will fit comfortably in pan), and cook until cheese melts and both sides turn golden brown, 4 to 5 minutes.
6. When finished, put quesadillas in large baking dish. Repeat until all quesadillas have been browned and arranged in baking dish. Top quesadillas with remaining salsa and cheese, and broil until cheese melts. Serve hot.

PER SERVING: 330 CAL; 20G PROT; 11G TOTAL FAT (0.5G SAT. FAT); 34G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 650MG SOD; 6G FIBER; 3G SUGARS ■

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EASY grains

BY NAVA ATLAS

Quick-cooking grains such as couscous, quinoa and bulgur pick up the dinner pace

no fuss

BARLEY WITH BLACK BEANS

SPINACH COUSCOUS WITH BBQ TOFU

CHUTNEY BULGUR WITH CURRIED CHICKPEAS

QUINOA AND MUSHROOM SKILLET

Dinner comes around every day. It demands our attention. It occupies our time. And thinking about what to serve that night can loom over the day like a cloud. But it doesn't have to be that way. This new column is designed to help make the daily big meal less of a stress. Because all the recipes use just 5 ingredients.

The grains they're centered around—quinoa, barley, bulgur and couscous—add a distinctive flavor and don't require endless cooking. Each dish is hearty enough to serve as a main course, but can also be used for stuffing winter squash and bell peppers or as a delicious filling for wraps.

BARLEY WITH BLACK BEANS

Serves 6

Almost everyone's familiar with pearl barley, but if you've got 10 extra minutes, consider pot barley too. It's similar in taste to the pearl but bigger grained. A purchased balsamic vinaigrette and roasted red peppers give this dish the spark of a warm salad. It's superb served with oven-roasted root vegetables and some cornbread.

1 cup pearl or pot barley, rinsed
1 15.5-oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 12-oz. jar roasted red bell peppers, drained and sliced
½ cup balsamic vinaigrette
2 Tbs. chopped fresh dill, or more to taste

1. Put 3 cups water into large saucepan, and bring to a boil over medium heat. Stir in barley. Cover, reduce heat to low and cook 30 minutes for pearl barley (40 minutes for pot barley), or until water is absorbed. (If grain is too chewy, add another ½ cup water, and cook until water is absorbed.)

2. Combine barley, black beans, roasted red peppers, vinaigrette and dill in mixing bowl. Season with salt and pepper, mix well and serve.

PER SERVING: 300 CAL; 8G PROT; 10G TOTAL FAT (1.5G SAT. FAT); 45G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 580MG SOD; 9G FIBER; 6G SUGARS

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SPINACH COUSCOUS WITH BBQ TOFU

Serves 6
30 minutes or fewer

Sizzling strips of baked tofu contrast with gently flavored couscous. Complete the meal with baked sweet potatoes.

1½ cups couscous, preferably whole grain
2 Tbs. nonhydrogenated vegan margarine
5 to 6 oz. baby spinach, well rinsed
1 1-lb. pkg. baked tofu, any variety, diced
⅓ cup natural or smoke-flavored barbecue sauce

1. Cover couscous with 3 cups boiling water in heatproof serving container, and let stand 10 minutes; fluff with fork. Stir in margarine and salt and pepper to taste.
2. Place spinach in large, wide skillet with only water clinging to its leaves. Cover, and steam about 1 minute, or just until wilted. Remove, and coarsely chop. Stir into couscous.
3. Combine tofu and barbecue sauce in skillet. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring often, 4 to 5 minutes. Scatter tofu over couscous, and serve.

PER SERVING: 340 CAL; 22G PROT; 12G TOTAL FAT (2G SAT. FAT); 38G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 630MG SOD; 6G FIBER; 7G SUGARS

CHUTNEY BULGUR WITH CURRIED CHICKPEAS

Serves 6

Try serving this with steamed broccoli and a fresh flatbread.

1¼ cups bulgur (presteamed cracked wheat)
1 20-oz. can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
3 ripe medium-sized tomatoes, diced
2 tsp. curry powder, or to taste
1 8- or 9-oz. jar sweet and spicy chutney, such as mango

1. Cover bulgur with 2 cups boiling water in heatproof container. Let stand, covered, until water is absorbed, about 30 minutes. For quicker results, combine bulgur and water in saucepan, and cook over medium-low heat until water is absorbed, about 15 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, combine chickpeas, tomatoes and curry in saucepan. Bring to a simmer over medium-low heat, and cook 2 to 3 minutes. Cover until needed.
3. Stir chutney into readied bulgur, and season with salt. To serve, mound portion of bulgur on each plate, and top with portion of chickpea mixture.

PER SERVING: 340 CAL; 10G PROT; 6G TOTAL FAT (0G SAT. FAT); 65G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 590MG SOD; 12G FIBER; 3G SUGARS

QUINOA AND MUSHROOM SKILLET

Serves 6
30 minutes or fewer

Quinoa might be considered a "superfood" for its superb protein content, but it's the unique nutty flavor of the tiny grain that wins cooks over. Try serving this accompanied by a salad of green and white cabbage with sliced apples, tossed in a ranch-style dressing.

2 Tbs. olive oil
1 medium-sized red onion, quartered and thinly sliced
1 cup quinoa, rinsed
2 cups vegetable stock
10 to 12 oz. crimini or baby bella mushrooms, sliced

1. Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add onion, and cook, stirring often, until golden, about 5 minutes.
2. Stir in quinoa, and cook, stirring often, 1 to 2 minutes, or until lightly toasted. Pour in stock.
3. Stir in mushrooms, cover and cook 15 minutes, or until stock is absorbed. Season with salt and pepper; serve hot.

PER SERVING: 180 CAL; 6G PROT; 6G TOTAL FAT (0.5G SAT. FAT); 25G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 135MG SOD; 2G FIBER; 2G SUGARS ■

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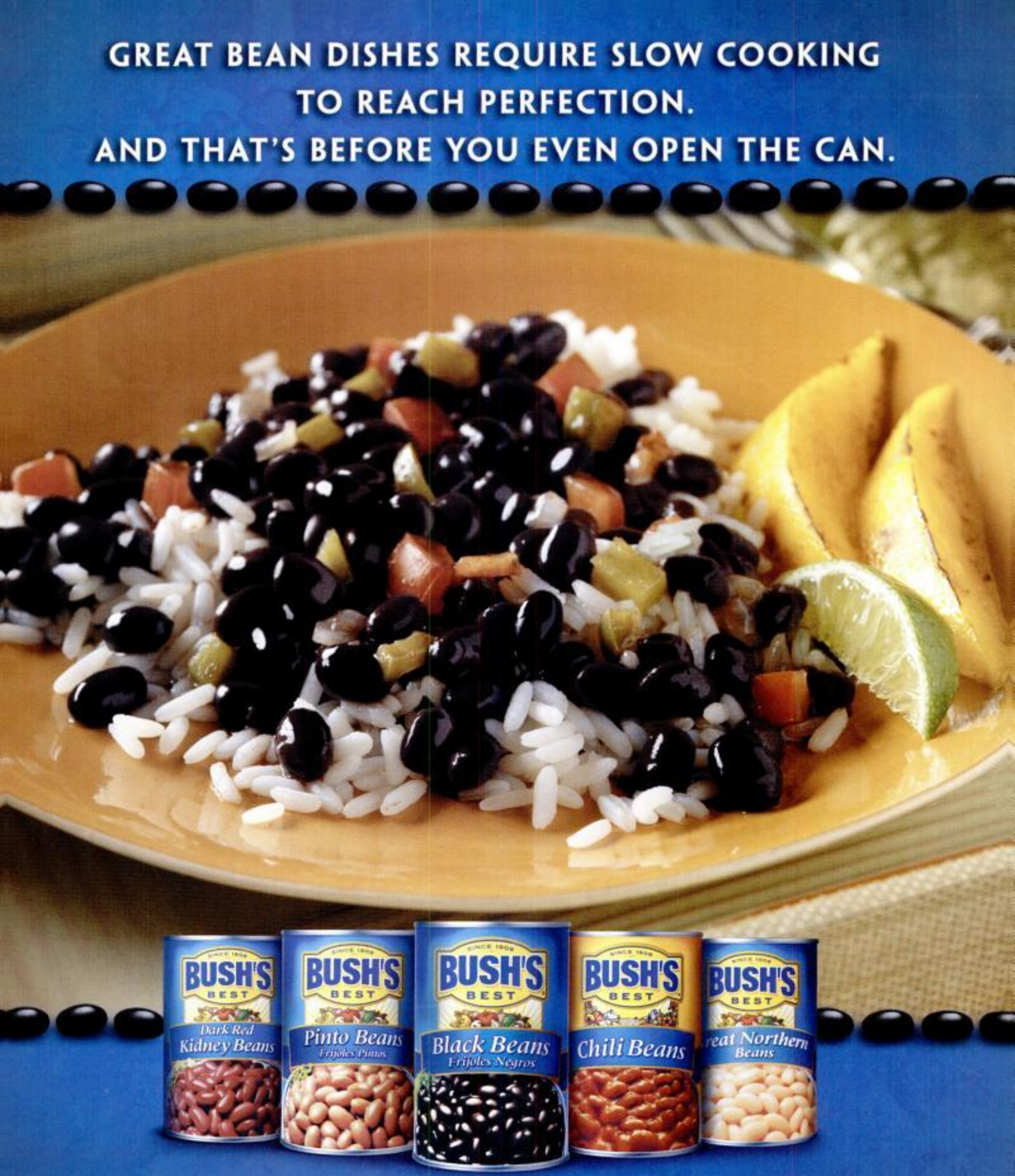

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SLOW COOKED TO PERFECTION.

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THE *other* HOLIDAY LEFTOVERS

BY LAURA FLYNN McCARTHY ILLUSTRATIONS BY TIMOTHY COOK

Candles, greenery, table decorations . . . they're so pretty. Too bad they all turn into trash. Here's how to put them to good use instead

93%

OF THE 23 MILLION CHRISTMAS TREES BOUGHT LAST YEAR WERE RECYCLED

As much as we love the celebrations and decorations of Thanksgiving, Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa and New Year's, they produce a season of excess. During the 5 weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's, the nation's trash increases by astronomical levels—some say millions of tons—a great deal of which could be reused or recycled. Before you buy, consider whether a product can have a second life. "Thinking green" during the holidays means getting into the spirit of giving back to the planet.

AUTUMN TREATS FOR WILDLIFE

"Look for pumpkins, ornamental corn and gourds that don't have waxes or other polishes on them," says Sally Conyne, director of citizen science at the National Audubon Society office in Ivyland, Pennsylvania. Then, when they've done their decorative jobs, don't drop them in the garbage. Add them to your compost pile, if you have one, or put them outside as food for wildlife. "Indian corn can be left on the cob for the birds to peck. The seeds in pumpkins and gourds are treats for birds, squirrels, chipmunks and other

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wildlife, so cut them open, and put them on the ground in an out-of-the-way place; the skin will mix in with the earth." (Discard any melted candle stubs from jack-o-lanterns first.)

GUILT-FREE DISPOSABLES

You're having a full house for Thanksgiving and don't have remotely enough dishes and pots? Here are guilt-free ways to use paper plates, foil pans and other handy disposable items.

- Look for recycled paper goods—they're rarely coated with plastics so they can usually be recycled again. Avoid Styrofoam products, which are the hardest to recycle.
- If you use paper or plastic cups, let the kids make name tags for them so people don't lose track of theirs and end up constantly grabbing a new one.
- Reuse and/or recycle even small aluminum foil pans.
- Have recycling bins for drink bottles and cans readily available; guests will use them if they can find them easily. Don't fall into the "just this once won't matter" syndrome: One aluminum can may take 80–100 years to break down in a landfill. Recycling it provides enough electricity to power a television for 3 hours, explains Kate Krebs, executive director of the National Recycling Coalition. Plastic bottles can take 700 years to break down, but they can be recycled into everything from more bottles to flooring, sleeping bags, even clothing.
- If you don't compost, see if your town does. "Many cities offer year-round programs called 'foodwaste' or 'greenwaste,' where compostable materials are either picked up with the garbage each week, or they can be dropped off at a central location," says Krebs. San Francisco's Environment Department has one of the country's most comprehensive foodwaste composting programs and runs a terrific Web site with how-to information: http://temp.sfgov.org/sfenvironment.

IT IS EASY BEING GREEN

Which is environmentally better: buying a live Christmas tree each year or buying an artificial tree that you use over and over again?

Surprisingly, environmental experts say a live tree is better. "A real tree is a renewable resource," explains Anne Reichman, director of Earth 911, a national environmental program and hotline. "It's farmed and harvested just like any other crop and then, ideally, put back into the earth through recycling and composting. An artificial tree can't be recycled, and after a few years, it usually ends up in a landfill."

Currently there are more than 4,000 tree recycling programs in the United States, according to Earth 911. And they're amazingly effective. Of the more than 23 million Christmas trees bought in the United States in 2003, about 93 percent wound up being recycled, according to the National Christmas Tree Association.

Some communities ask you to drop off your tree at a central location; others do pickups. Most recycled trees are cut up and used as mulch or compost for community landscaping projects. Some are placed on beaches to stop erosion or put in fish ponds to encourage animal habitats. To be sure that your tree can be recycled, remove everything—ornaments, garland, tinsel. Also, avoid buying trees that are "flocked" (sprayed with white paint); many recycling programs won't accept them because the paints can be hard to break down. To check on local tree recycling, call your department of parks or environmental services, or log on to www.earth911.org, which lists tree-recycling services by ZIP code.

"If you don't have access to a tree recycling program, consider simply putting the tree in a corner of the yard for the winter," says Conyne. "The branches provide hiding places and protection from wind and predators for rabbits, birds and other small wildlife. By spring, the tree will have dried out, which makes it much lighter and easier to break up for kindling or mulch."

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DECORATE THE BACKYARD

You can just skip all of the above, and decorate a tree outside for wildlife—a great project for kids. Use twine and tapestry needles to string together garlands of dried orange sections and apples, cranberries or grapes. Roll pine cones in peanut butter and then in birdseed. Cut out bread with holiday cookie cutters, let it get slightly stale, then attach it to branches of the tree. For more easy tips, log on to the Web site of the National Wildlife Federation: www.nwf.org.

THINK OUTSIDE THE GIFT BOX

Okay, so now you've got lots of great ideas for Earth-friendly

- Remove all ornaments and wires from wreaths and garlands, and compost the greenery or pile it up in the woods to make a small-animal shelter.
- Be inventive when wrapping gifts: Recycle comics, old posters, leftover wallpaper, maps you no longer use, even paper bags decorated with ink stamps, stickers or colored markers.
- Use recyclable craft paper to make Chanukah decorations for children.
- A growing number of malls offer "boxing days" shortly after the holidays; you can bring in your corrugated cardboard boxes for recycling. Check local malls.
- If you're mailing gifts, pack

One way to cut down on wrapping paper: Don't wrap gifts for pets! In a holiday poll, 67 percent of people said they do

Christmas trees, but what about all of the other stuff that accumulates throughout the holidays, including wrapping paper, wreaths, garlands and other household decorations? Close that trash can lid! There are plenty of other solutions.

- Don't wrap gifts for pets! In a holiday survey, 80 percent of people said they bought Christmas gifts for their pets—and 67 percent said they wrapped them, according to the poll, which was done by CNN in December 2001.
- Tuck leftover sprigs of mistletoe into a tree for the birds to eat. While the berries are poisonous for humans, dogs and cats, they are perfectly safe for birds, says the National Audubon Society's Conyne.

them in old newspapers or stuff grocery store plastic bags in the gaps to prevent crushing. If you receive a gift cushioned in Styrofoam peanuts or plastic packing materials, call your local UPS or Mailboxes, Etc. store. Some branches will accept these materials and reuse/recycle them.

- Some of the most welcome Chanukah, Christmas and Kwanzaa gifts require little or no wrapping—gift certificates, of course, but also local museum memberships, theater tickets and donations in the recipients' names to their favorite charity.
- Decorate Kwanzaa dinner tables with festive, reusable, brightly printed fabric.
- Recycle greeting cards by cutting out the pictures and using them as gift tags next year. ■

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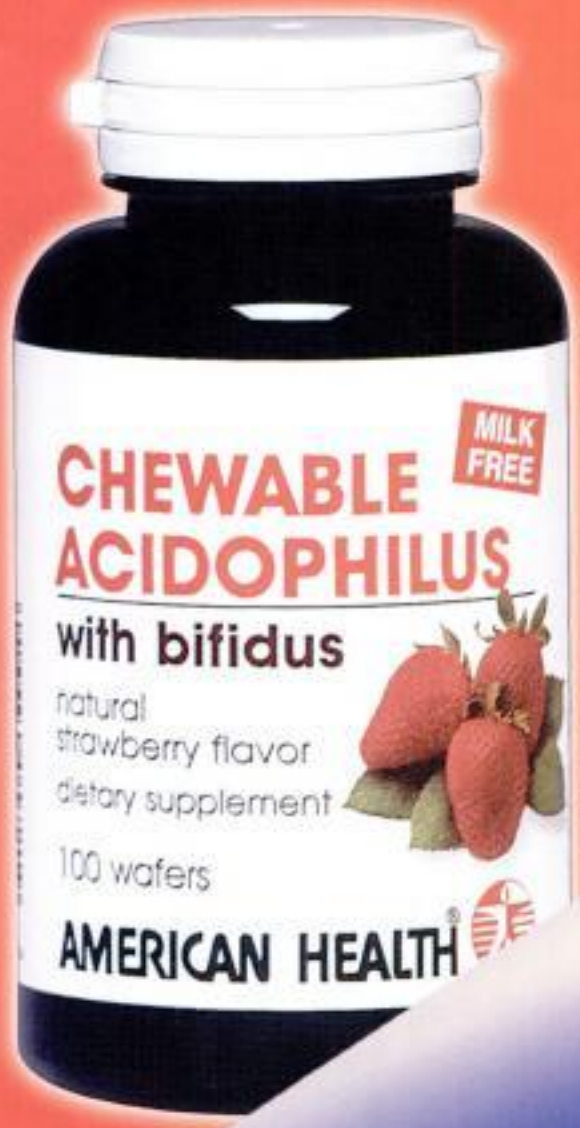

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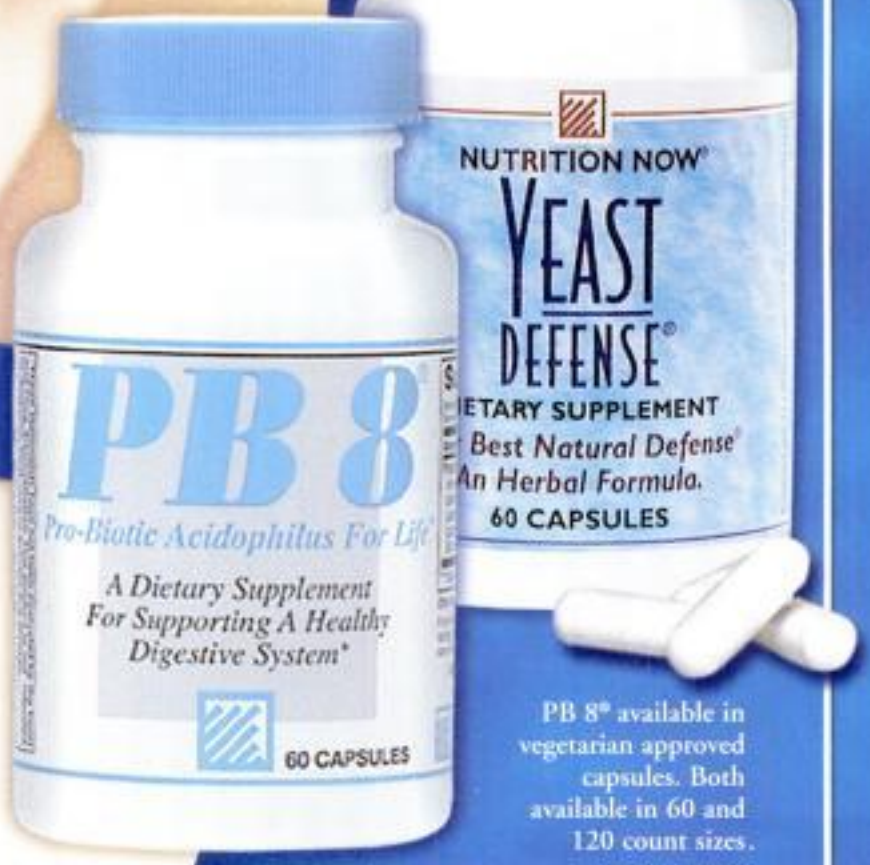

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beet GENERATION

BY DON BAKER

Tastier and more nutritious, Irwin Goldman's superbeets and other superorganic vegetables reflect new "smart breeding"

Don't expect a big difference, but the beets you buy next year may be sweeter, redder, richer in iron and even larger than this year's. You can look for comparable improvements during the next decade in corn, rice, potatoes, apples—you name it. And these subtle but significant changes will owe nothing to the little-understood (and scary) science of genetic engineering (GE), or to industrial-strength herbicides or pesticides.

A quiet revolution is overtaking modern agriculture, and it's an organic one. In both sophisticated university labs and on tiny farms in impoverished Third World countries, scientists are developing new varieties of everyday fruits, vegetables and grains that don't just taste better—though they do. These crops are also more resistant to disease and harsh weather, and they are more nutritious. Giant food companies, eager to reap the rewards, have begun to join in the research. Third World leaders are watching closely, believing these "superorganics" will help feed hungry people.

Above: In "smart breeding," Goldman uses native plants—even weeds—to improve crops.

psst

A QUIET REVOLUTION IS OVERTAKING AGRICULTURE, AND IT'S ORGANIC. CORN, RICE, APPLES—ALL WILL BE BIGGER AND BETTER

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Saturated Fat	0.5g	3g
Cholesterol	0	20mg
Sugar	7g	12g
Sodium	95mg	100mg
Carbohydrates	10g	11g
Vitamin A	10%	10%
Vitamin D	30%	25%
Calcium	30%	30%
Iron	6%	0%
Folate	6%	3%

By switching genes on and off, Goldman can change a beet's color—and boost its nutritional value.

The scientists themselves—soft-spoken people like Irwin Goldman, a horticulturist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison—don't talk in terms of "revolution," but they don't undervalue their work either. A few years ago, Goldman discovered that some rare, almost forgotten breeds of white carrots contain vitamin E, previously thought to occur (in the vegetable world) only in sweet potatoes. By crossbreeding these rare carrots with their common orange cousins, he succeeded in placing vitamin E in the orange carrot, giving it, and us, a nutritional bonus.

Whenever Goldman wants to produce a stronger, tastier, more nutritious crop, all he does is put one plant with the desired characteristic next to one that lacks it. Then he just lets Mother Nature—or bees and other insects that help her—do the rest.

"But sometimes all I need to do is place two beets in a cage and smack the side with a stick, or direct a fan in there, and they cross," Goldman says. He then plants seeds from the newly cross-pollinated plant, harvests a second generation and keeps breeding.

Goldman employs the same method of crossbreeding that has been used for thousands of years—with a high-tech difference. He and other horticulturists can accomplish things their forebears could not—and in record time—thanks to advances that occurred only in 1986. That's when Susan McCouch, then a graduate student at Cornell and now an associate professor of plant breeding and plant biology there, mapped the 40,000 genes of the rice genome—its DNA.

This research revealed that the rice DNA could be used to mark genetic characteristics of other grains, fruits and vegetables. For the first time, it was possible to pinpoint the exact spot on the chromosome of a variety of corn, for example, that lets it stand up to insects—a coveted characteristic.

PHOTOGRAPHY JEFF MILLER/UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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"These discoveries," says McCouch, "show us which plants to mate so they produce disease-resistant strains or whatever trait we want to encourage. That's all that 'smart breeding' is. Until now, crossbreeding was trial and error. But gene maps let us mate just the right plants."

What once took years now only takes weeks. The cross-bred seedlings can be tested right away to see if the desired genetic changes occurred. If not, new matings can begin. It was this approach that allowed Goldman to produce his superbeets so quickly.

A trim, 41-year-old triathlete and vegetarian, Goldman also experimented with the two genes that make red beets red. He actually figured out how to switch off one gene, making the beet gold. Switching genes on and off, he bred a striped beet with a bull's-eye appearance.

Fun stuff, but with a serious side: Goldman discovered that beet pigments are rich in an antioxidant called betalain. Betalain stimulates the production of enzymes that slow some risks of aging, including cancer and cardiovascular disease. High-betalain beets aren't available yet. "But within 5 years, smart breeding will have impacted virtually all commercial farming," McCouch predicts.

Increasing yields—a key smart-breeding goal—is highly important in Third World countries faced with starvation and malnutrition."Smart

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breeding holds great promise there," McCouch says. "Gene maps are free, so it costs next to nothing to do smart breeding. Also, smart breeding uses native plants, even 'weeds,' which often have genes that can improve food crops.

"Smart breeding allows us to reintroduce diversity into agriculture, using little-known types of corn, rice and other crops neglected for years. Just because a variety may not have the tallest plant or biggest yield doesn't mean it lacks other valuable characteristics."

Few smart-bred crops are available yet. Even though Goldman's yellow beet is grown by some Community Supported Agriculture programs, the most exciting work is still in the lab. At universities throughout the world, research similar to Goldman's is being replicated with corn, soybeans, tomatoes and apples.

Ironically, the first place that smart breeding will make itself felt—or tasted—is likely to be in ketchup. "Scientists are breeding tomatoes that are 30-40 percent higher in sugar," McCouch says. "Because sweetness is important in ketchup, that's where these tomatoes may be used first."

For now, members of Goldman's family are among the fortunate few. His wife and two children get to eat the vegetables he breeds and brings home for dinner. Thanks to Dad's work, one thing he never has to do is tell the kids to eat their beets. Ah, the wonders of modern science! ■

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BYE-BYE, *birdie*

BY LUCIE L. SNODGRASS
ILLUSTRATION BY CHRIS O'LEARY

You won't find a turkey on our dinner table this year, and our home will feel freer for it

fly

SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO START NEW TRADITIONS TO LET OLD ONES GO

This year—just as we have done since my 88-year-old mother-in-law finally gave up hosting Thanksgiving several years ago—my husband, Ed, and I will welcome 16 or so relatives to our farm in Maryland. As I always do, I will polish my grandmother's silver; press the smooth, lavender-scented damask tablecloth; put both leaves into the cherry table; and set the places with my yellow Depression glass. My sister, Alexandra, will create six tiny centerpieces in autumn shades of orange, red and yellow. We'll light the beeswax tapers. Then, along with millions of families throughout the country, we'll give thanks for another year that has spared us hardship and spared us the soldiers' deaths that sadden so many. We'll stop to reflect, silently and individually, on our many blessings and privileges, and we'll remember those who are homeless, hungry or simply alone. And then, finally, we will eat.

On this Thanksgiving, however, we will depart from tradition. There will be no turkey at all: not a drop of giblet gravy, not a shred of browned turkey skin, not a sliver of breast or a single scrap for Huckleberry, our newly rescued hound.

Instead, I am honoring Ed, my vegetarian husband, and the decision he made 30 years ago never again to eat meat or fish. It was a decision that baffled—and perhaps still baffles—his farming family, which raised and slaughtered its own beef. For the longest time, Ed told me, they used to wonder when that "phase of his" was going to end. When it didn't, they just didn't talk about it. But their reticence didn't spare him, of course, from jokes about saving him a drumstick.

For 3 decades, Ed has good-naturedly taken part in all his family's holiday meals, even though he is nauseated by the smell of cooked meat. At his mother's, he never complained about not being able to eat the stuffing, which was baked inside

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From the EDEN Kitchens

Quinoa Stuffed Acorn Squash with Cherries

Ingredients

½ cup EDEN Organic Quinoa, cooked

2 medium acorn squash, halved and seeded

½ cup walnuts, chopped

½ cup EDEN Dried Montmorency Cherries

2 Tablespoons EDEN Organic Barley Malt

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

EDEN Organic Safflower Oil

Preheat oven to 350°.

Lightly oil the squash. Mix warm quinoa, barley malt, walnuts, cherries, and cinnamon. Stuff each squash half with the mixture. Bake in a covered dish 45 minutes or until squash is tender.

Serves 4

Prep Time 10 *minutes*

Cooking Time 45 *minutes*

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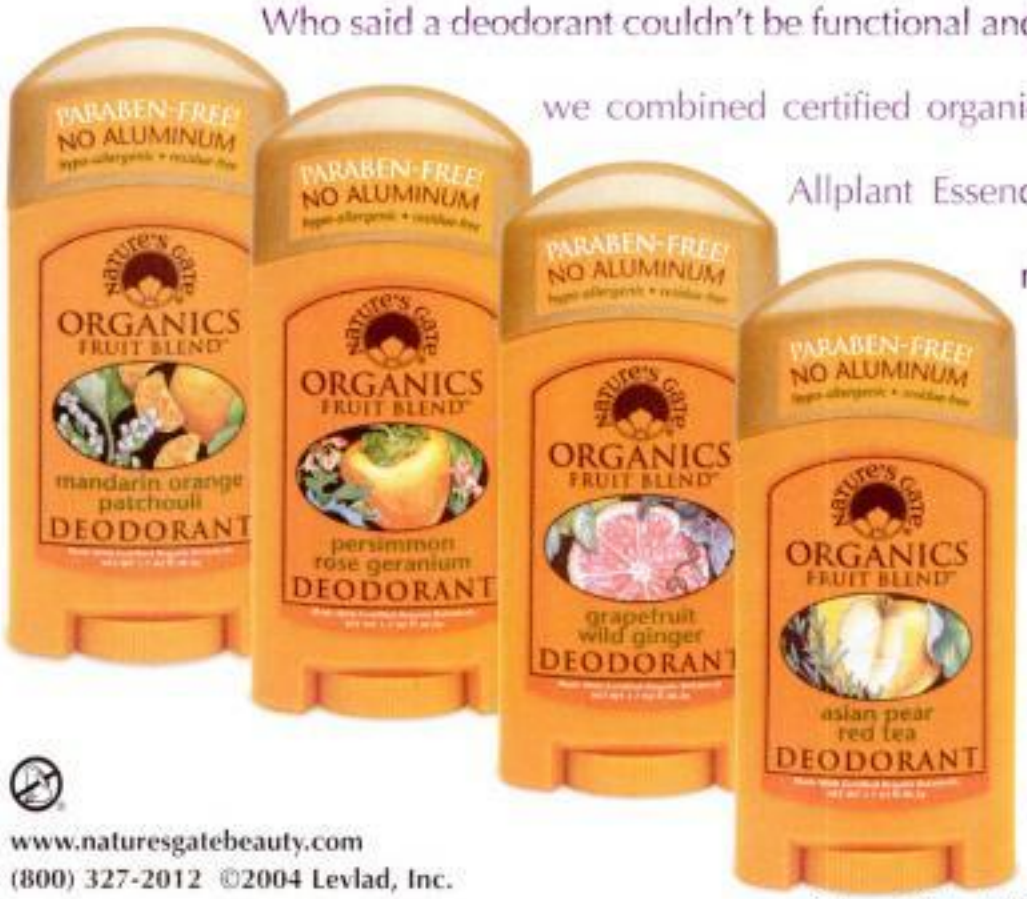

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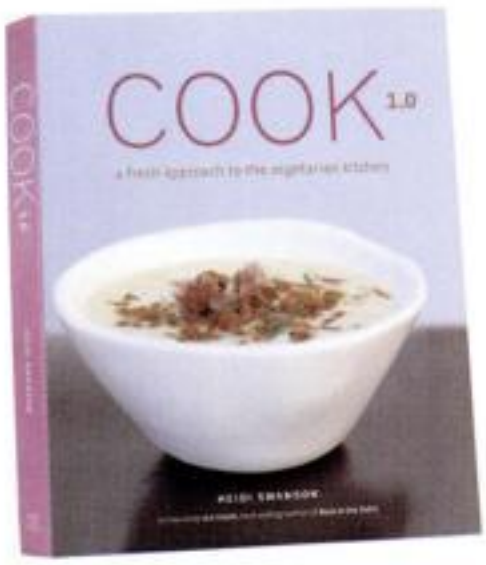
Circle reply #26 on Info Center card

DEBORAH KRASNER *review*

ONE COOKBOOK, MULTIPLE THEMES,



Cook 1.0: A Fresh Approach to the Vegetarian Kitchen

By Heidi Swanson (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2004)

Designed primarily for the beginning vegetarian cook, *Cook 1.0* by Heidi Swanson offers an easy-to-follow method for learning to cook a wide variety of crowd-pleasing favorites. Not only are the recipes easy, reliable and fast, but Swanson's unique method of organization—which teaches you how to improvise—is a terrific tool for eager but less-than-confident cooks.

The organization of this book is unusual but extremely user-friendly. Think of *Cook 1.0* as a series of boxes within boxes. The biggest box is a major section—say, lunch. Within the chapter called "Lunchbox," there are smaller boxes or mini-chapters. Each of these explores a kind of lunch dish—for example, paninis, quesadillas, pocket tarts, savory kabobs or thin-crust pizzas.

And within each of these, there are even smaller boxes—four to six recipes in an easy chart form—that focus on several related but often quite different dishes. In the mini-chapter devoted to paninis, for instance, the chart gives recipes for six panini variations: tomato and mozzarella; goat cheese and walnuts; marinated artichokes; brie and apples; roasted vegetables; and peanut butter, jelly and banana. Each stands alone, but clustering the recipes illustrates the whole concept of paninis.

Or take pancakes, one of five mini-chapters in the breakfast section (the others are biscuits, smoothies, fruit bowls and frittatas). Swanson starts with a basic buttermilk pancake recipe that's so good it has become my family's gold standard. Then she fills out the chart with four more recipes for fruit-based pancakes that are original and surprisingly good. Feeling dubious about some of

SAMPLE RECIPE FROM *cook 1.0*

banana-macadamia pancakes

In a large bowl, combine:

- *2 c.* ***unbleached all-purpose flour***
- *1 t.* ***baking powder***
- *½ t.* ***baking soda***
- *⅓ c.* ***sugar***
- *A pinch of* ***salt***
- *1 t.* ***nutmeg,*** *freshly grated*

To dry ingredients, add:

- *2 c.* ***buttermilk***
- *2 large* ***eggs,*** *lightly beaten*
- *2 T.* ***unsalted butter,*** *melted*
- *1 big handful* ***sweetened shredded coconut***
- *1 big handful* ***macadamia nuts,*** *crushed*

Stir all the ingredients together until they are just combined. It's okay if the batter is a bit lumpy. Don't overmix.

Heat your skillet or pan to medium-hot and brush it with a bit of butter. If a drop of water dropped onto the pan starts to dance, you are in the ballpark.

Slowly pour about ⅓ c. of the batter onto the skillet.

Place about 3 extra-thin slices of ***banana*** *on top of the dollop of pancake batter as it is cooking.*

Wait until the pancake bottom is deep golden in color, then flip with a spatula and cook the other side until golden and cooked through. Repeat with remaining batter and more banana slices. These take a bit longer to cook than most of the other pancakes in this book.

Top with sifted ***powdered sugar,*** ***Pineapple Butter*** *(page 123), or crushed* ***honeycomb.***

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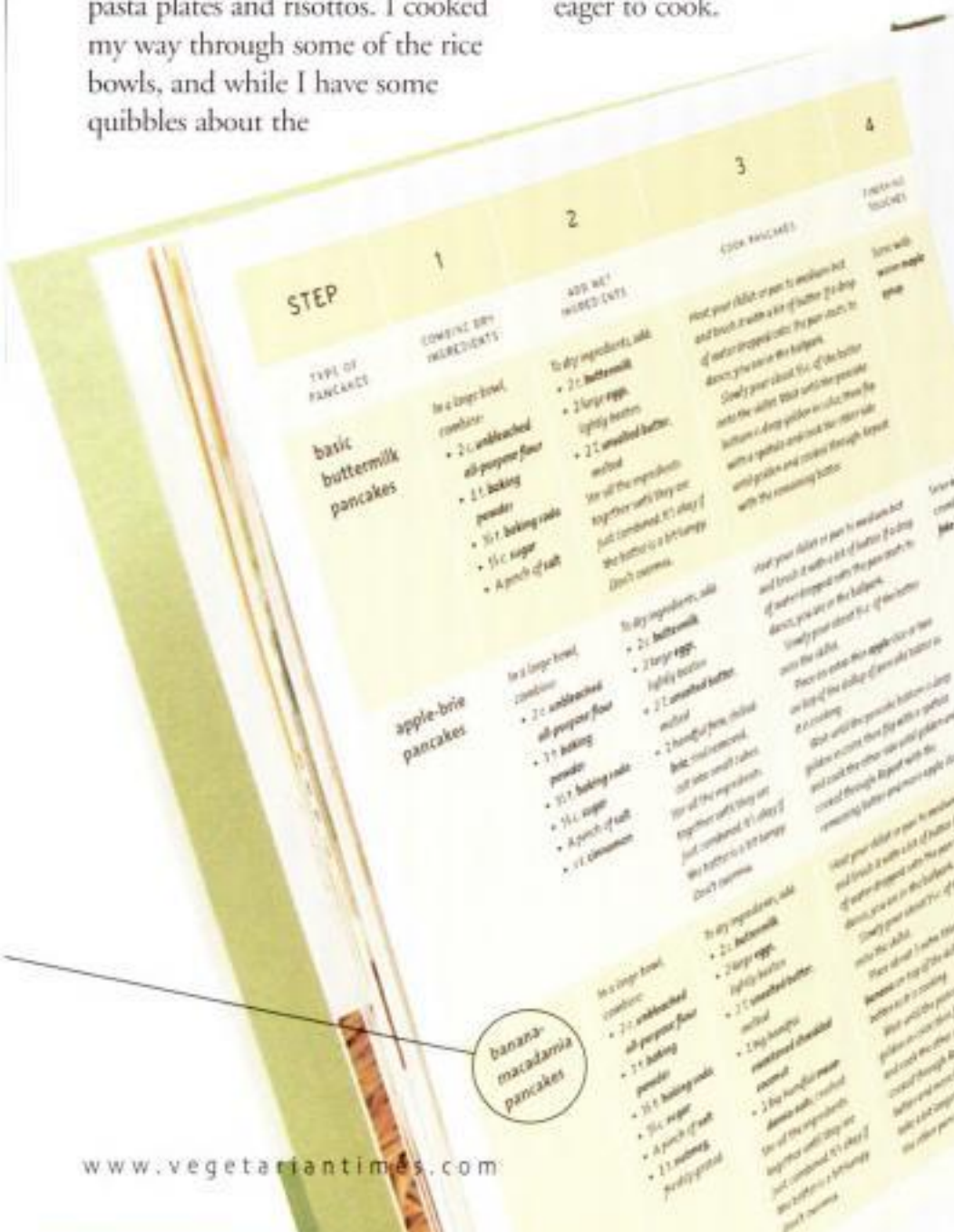
ENDLESS RECIPES!

the offerings, I made the banana-macadamia pancakes with coconut, only to discover that they were a hit, especially for those with a sweet tooth.

Dinners are likewise innovative, cross-cultural and flavorful. Swanson advocates one-dish cooking, and her goal is to make suppers in under an hour that taste like they took 4 hours. Her one-dish recipes include pot pies, rice bowls, fondues, stir-fries, pasta plates and risottos. I cooked my way through some of the rice bowls, and while I have some quibbles about the spiced mango rice bowl (it tasted more like a dessert recipe), I'm ready to buy into the concept that variations on a basic theme can produce very different dishes.

In fact, that's what makes this book so appealing—it encourages you to experiment and explore. *Cook 1.0* is also beautiful, with gorgeous photographs. The show-stopping images have a powerful effect: They pull you into the kitchen, stomach growling, eager to cook.



Cook 1.0: A Fresh Approach to the Vegetarian Kitchen

Our pro reviewer

Deborah Krasner is an ardent reader, reviewer and writer of cookbooks. Her latest is *The Flavors of Olive Oil*, a 2003 James Beard Award winner.

The recipes are vegetarian but not vegan—that is, they include dairy products.

Many of the recipes have a high sugar content. If you're calorie- or cavity-conscious, pick and choose.

"The recipes are extremely easy," Krasner says. "This is a good book for a beginning cook."

"Photography and design play a *huge* role in this book," Krasner says. "The graphic recipe charts also make it a visual standout."

"The recipes are fast to prepare. Founder of a network of women's Webzines, the author is attuned to instant gratification."

{$} {$} {$}
"At $27.50, this hardcover is a good value. Because the 40 basic recipes have so many variations, the final recipe count is nearly 250."

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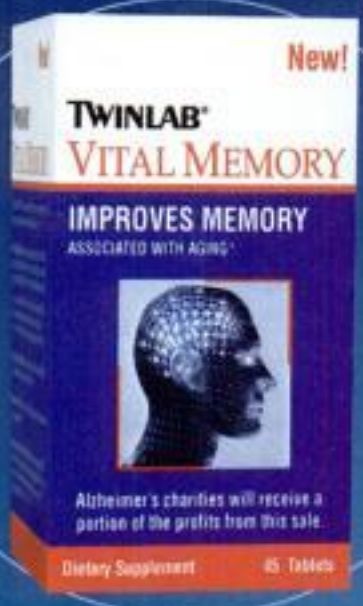

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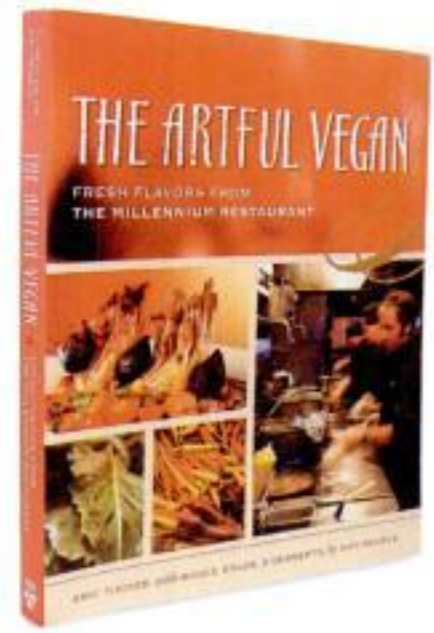

The Artful Vegan: Fresh Flavors from The Millennium Restaurant
By Eric Tucker with Bruce Enloe; desserts by Amy Pearce
(Ten Speed Press, 2003)

Our reader reviewer

Freelance writer and Florida resident Ellen Kanner is better known to *Miami Herald* readers as the syndicated food columnist Edgy Veggie. "I went vegetarian at age 13, much to my parents' distress, and haven't missed meat for a minute," she says. Kanner owns 80 cookbooks and says *The Artful Vegan* is a favorite. "Millennium, San Francisco's pioneer gourmet vegan restaurant, is turning 10, but chef Eric Tucker is as inspired as ever. His innovative recipes in this wonderful book showcase field-fresh produce and sensual spicing."
Why I chose this recipe: "This nog has all the flavor, froth and creaminess of high-test eggnog but with far less fat and calories," Kanner says. "Zero guilt and vegan-friendly—it's everything we want for the holidays. Cheers!"

All recipes are 100 percent vegan—no eggs, no dairy products.

The detailed nutritional analyses are a plus. However, if you read them closely, you might be alarmed by the high percentage of fat calories in some recipes. But keep in mind that vegan recipes are usually very low in calories, so *any* fat can make the calories-from-fat percentage seem high.

"Cutting-edge cuisine doesn't come easy," Kanner says. "The sparkling flavors and textures that typify Millennium's vegan cuisine can't be tossed together in 5 minutes, but Tucker walks you through every step. Nonetheless, *The Artful Vegan* can be a daunting prospect for novice—or nervous—cooks. Because Tucker treats the reader like a peer, he assumes culinary knowledge, creativity and passion equal to his own."

"The lavish color photography turns food model-chic, but the careful instructions let the reader reproduce Millennium's palate-dazzling dishes at home."

"Tucker's gourmet recipes are labor-intensive. Though every dish is sumptuous, the book contains few dishes that you'd want to whip up after a long day's work."

At 232 pages, *The Artful Vegan* is competitively priced at $24.95.

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SAMPLE *recipe*

THE ULTIMATE VEGAN NOG

Makes 4 1-cup servings

"This one isn't really a 'basic,' Eric Tucker says, "but we wanted to share our version of vegan nog. Stephanie Hibbert has been our reigning vegan eggnog maker for the past several Thanksgivings. On Thanksgiving morning, she comes in at 6 a.m. and prepares 8 gallons of nog. This recipe yields a more manageable quart. We generally use the Mori-Nu brand of silken tofu because it blends up perfectly smooth."

12 ounces silken tofu
1 very ripe banana
⅓ cup pure maple syrup
1½ tablespoons pure vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon salt
¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg, plus more for garnish
1 cup almond milk, or soy milk or rice milk (for nut-free)
1 cup rice milk
1½ cups soy milk

Combine all of the ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth and frothy. Ladle into cups and sprinkle nutmeg over each serving. (Store refrigerated for up to 2 days.)

VT's NUTRITIONAL ANALYSIS
(the cookbook provides its own)
PER SERVING: 250 CAL; 9G PROT; 5G TOTAL FAT (0.5G SAT. FAT); 41G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 250MG SOD; 1G FIBER; 28G SUGARS

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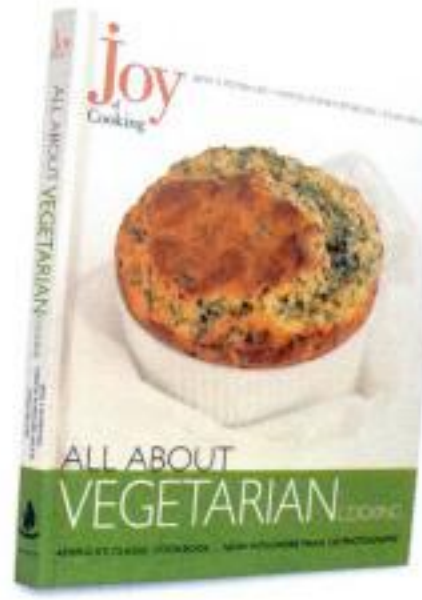
THIS NEW FAVORITE'S A JOY



Joy of Cooking: All About Vegetarian Cooking

By Irma S. Rombauer, Marion Rombauer Becker and Ethan Becker (Simon & Schuster, 2000)

Our reader reviewer

VT Managing Editor Carla Davis has been reading and collecting cookbooks for more than 25 years. "I find them irresistible," she says. "And most of them I don't even use!" Davis' array of more than 80 cookbooks includes everything from simple spiral-bound fundraiser cookbooks to lavish bookstore beauties with hundreds of pages and lush photos. *Joy of Cooking: All About Vegetarian Cooking* is a new favorite. **Why I chose this recipe:** "It's an easy and attractive entrée that takes only about 45 minutes from start to finish, but it looks like it took hours. Your guests will think you really made a fuss over them."

All of the recipes are vegetarian; many are vegan.

"The recipes seem health-conscious, although it's difficult to be sure without nutritional analyses. That lack is the book's one real shortcoming."

"This *Joy* is best for a beginning cook who wants to master basic skills, such as preparing a stock, garnishing a salad or chopping an onion. A few plusses: The recipes use easy-to-find ingredients and everyday cookware, and each recipe easily could be adapted for singles, families or entertaining. A few minuses: As in the original *Joy of Cooking*, the recipe format is irritating. You have to wade through them to find the ingredients, which, thankfully, are in bold. And the preparation steps aren't numbered."

"The photos sell this book. The cover says there are more than 150 photos—I believe it! The step-by-step process shots are great. They take the guesswork out of preparing these recipes. Overall, the book is attractive and easy to read."

Most of the recipes can be prepared in well under an hour.

"Considering that *Joy* has 128 pages and all those photos, $15.95 seems like a very fair price for this hardcover."

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SAMPLE *recipe*

ROLLED STUFFED EGGPLANTS

4 servings

The rolls can be formed well in advance and refrigerated before baking. Editor's note: The book suggests serving these surrounded with Italian tomato sauce.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Lightly oil a 13 x 9-inch baking dish. Combine in a bowl:

¾ cup shredded provolone or mozzarella cheese
¾ cup ricotta cheese
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
2 tablespoons chopped fresh marjoram or basil
1 small clove garlic, minced

Cut lengthwise into ¼-inch-thick slices:

1 large eggplant (about 1¼ pounds)

Brush both sides of the slices with:

Olive oil

Cook the eggplant in batches in a skillet until golden, about 5 minutes each side, then remove to a platter. Spread a mound of the cheese mixture at the base of each eggplant slice, then roll it up. Arrange the rolls seam side down in the baking dish. Cover the dish and bake until heated through and the cheese is melted, about 20 minutes. Remove the rolls to warmed plates.

VT'S NUTRITIONAL ANALYSIS

PER SERVING: 250 CAL; 12G PROT; 19G TOTAL FAT (9G SAT. FAT); 9G CARB; 35MG CHOL; 240MG SOD; 0G FIBER; 2G SUGARS

■

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spicy SURPRISE

BY MARY MARGARET CHAPPELL

It's good for your pies. It's good for your pasta sauce. It's even good for your blood

Cinnamon may be the best known, best loved spice in America, even though most of us have never tasted the "true" stuff. What we call cinnamon is actually cassia, a darker, stronger, spicier cousin of "true" Ceylon cinnamon. But don't head off to find the Ceylon type quite yet. "When people hear 'true cinnamon,' they think 'Oh, that's what I want,'" says Pamela Penzey of Penzeys Spices in Brookfield, Wisconsin. "But really, if you're looking for the taste that takes you back to Grandma's kitchen, you want cassia."

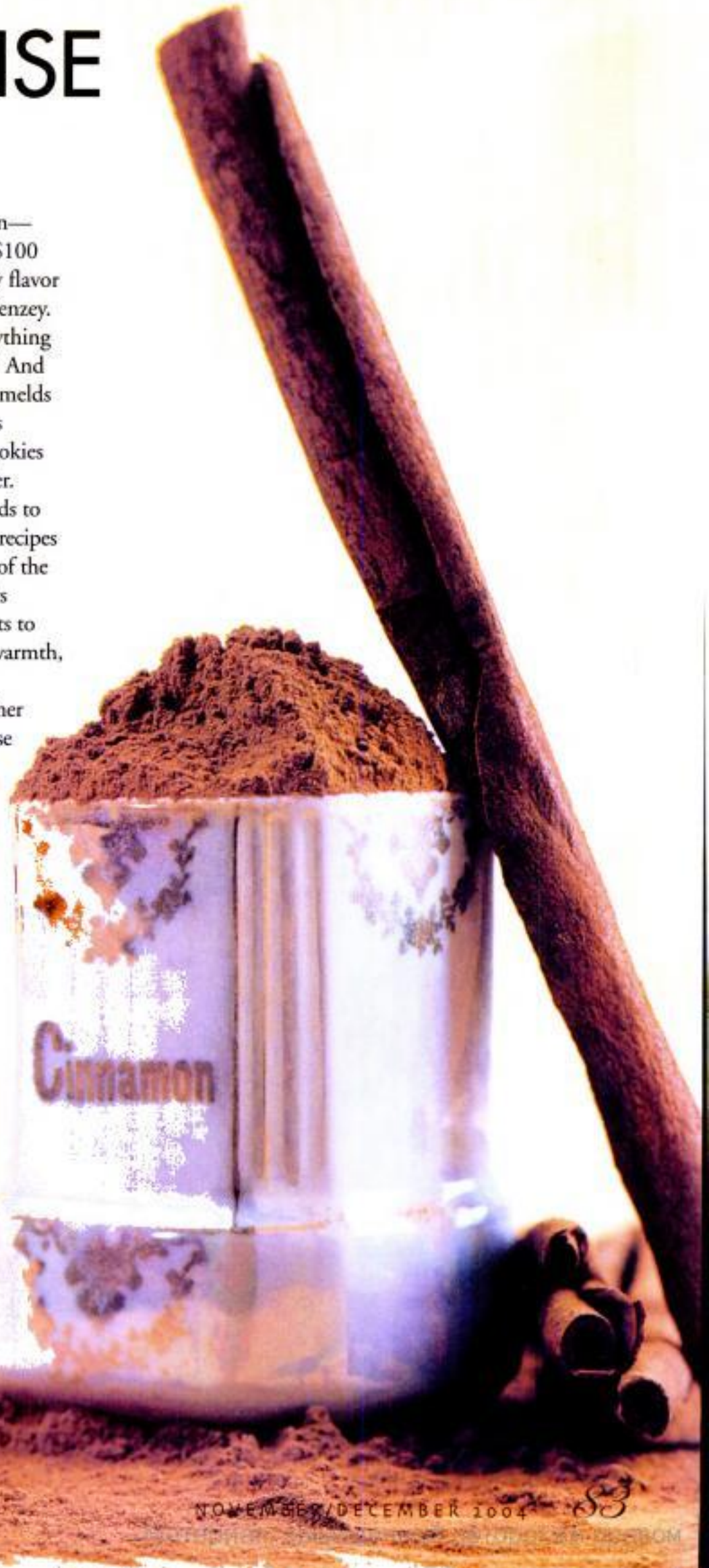
Americans have had a love affair with cassia ever since it was brought in from China and Vietnam in the 19th century as a less expensive alternative to Ceylon cinnamon—which, at that time, cost over $100 a pound. "Cassia's strong, spicy flavor caught on like wildfire," says Penzey. Today we use it to season everything from fine pastries to Pop Tarts. And at this time of year, cinnamon melds with ginger, nutmeg and cloves to create fragrant pies, spicy cookies and warm mugs of mulled cider.

While American cooking tends to celebrate cinnamon itself—our recipes may call for heaping teaspoons of the spice—other cuisines tap into its subtler side, using small amounts to mellow sharp flavors or infuse warmth, depth and a delicate sweetness. Moroccan couscous is made richer with cinnamon. The Chinese use cinnamon sticks in some soy and ginger braising liquids, and ground cinnamon is an essential element in Chinese five-spice powder. Indian cooks often add cinnamon to curries. And no true Cincinnati chili—the city's famous for it—would be complete without a pinch or two.

But the most surprising use of cinnamon may be in Italian cuisine. "The farther south you go, the more cinnamon becomes an Italian spice," explains Erica De Mane, author of *The Flavors of Southern Italy*. "I was amazed by how the smallest dash

1/4 tsp

HEALTH RESEARCHERS SAY WE SHOULD ALL EAT THAT MUCH EVERY DAY



who KNEW!? CINNAMON IS SERIOUS MEDICINE

Eating half a teaspoon of cinnamon a day can lower blood sugar levels significantly, according to a recent study led by Richard A. Anderson, PhD, at the US Department of Agriculture's Human Nutrition Research Center in Beltsville, Maryland. The discovery was a fluke. While studying the effects of common foods on blood sugar, Anderson was startled to find that apple pie—which is super-sugary but laced with cinnamon—actually reduced blood sugar levels instead of raising them. Further research found that the blood sugar of type 2 diabetics who ate as little as ½ teaspoon of cinnamon a day was 18–29 percent lower than those who skipped the spice. "We recommend cinnamon for all people, not just type 2 diabetics," says Anderson, citing the spice's ability to improve insulin function, lower blood sugar and help keep blood healthy. The ideal dosage? "About ¼–½ teaspoon twice a day," says Anderson. "I like cinnamon in my morning OJ, but it's also excellent on fruit and oatmeal."

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Recipe by Molly Katzen

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10 frozen strawberries
1 cup unsweetened yogurt
1/2 cup orange juice
1 packet SweetLeaf SteviaPlus
(possibly more)

Combine all ingredients in a blender jar and whip until smooth. Taste to correct sweetening – you might wish to add an additional packet of SweetLeaf SteviaPlus. Serve right away.

Yield: 2 servings

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can transform a dish when I recreated a cinnamon-scented ravioli my mother remembered from childhood. I added just a pinch to a pound of ricotta," she says. "The result was a sweet, exotic taste that came through even after the tomato sauce was added."

In her own cooking, De Mane adds cinnamon to everything from hearty entrées to zesty tomato sauces. "When I put even the tiniest bit in savory dishes, it just brings it all together." This less-is-more rule can work wonders in vegetarian cooking where small amounts of cinnamon add depth to simple dishes. For instance:

- Half a stick stirred into a pot of rice adds an enticing scent.
- A shake of cinnamon brings out the sweetness of carrots and squash.
- A dash tames the bitterness of leafy winter greens such as kale.
- A light sprinkle perks up blah coffee beans.
- A dusting enlivens pie crust flour.
- A pinch makes creamy quiche fillings taste even richer.

So, the next time you want to add a subtle, surprising, "what's in this?" touch to a dish, just reach for the cinnamon. A quick shake will do it.

recipe

PURÉED ZUCCHINI SOUP WITH BASIL OIL AND RICOTTA

Serves 6

Recipe adapted from *The Flavors of Southern Italy* by Erica De Mane (John Wiley and Sons, April 2004).

Basil Oil

1 cup packed fresh basil leaves
½ cup extra virgin olive oil

Soup

2 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil
2 shallots, finely chopped
2 stalks celery, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, chopped
1½ lb. small, tender zucchini, cut into ½-inch cubes
¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
3 cups vegetable stock
Squeeze of lemon juice
1 cup skim-milk or whole-milk ricotta
¼ cup 1% or whole milk

1. To make Basil Oil: In small pan of boiling water, blanch basil leaves for about 30 seconds. Transfer leaves to colander, and rinse with cold water. Squeeze basil, and put in food processor. Add olive oil, and process until puréed. Pour into small bowl.

2. To make Soup: Warm oil in large pot over medium heat. Add shallots and celery; cook, stirring often, until vegetables begin to soften, 3 or 4 minutes. Add garlic, zucchini, cinnamon, salt and pepper to taste. Cook, stirring occasionally, until zucchini begins to soften, 2 to 4 minutes.

3. Add stock, increase heat to high and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium, and cook until vegetables are very tender, about 10 minutes.

4. Put soup in food processor, and purée until smooth. Return to pot; add lemon juice, and add extra pepper, if needed.

5. In small bowl, mix ricotta with just enough milk to thin to consistency of yogurt. Ladle soup into serving bowls. Top with dollop of ricotta mixture, and drizzle with 1 teaspoon basil oil or more as desired.

PER SERVING: 150 CAL; 5G PROT; 10G TOTAL FAT (1.5G SAT. FAT); 11G CARB; 5MG CHOL; 270MG SOD; 2G FIBER; 5G SUGARS

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vegan GOURMET

BY MARIE OSER

No eggs, cheeses or dairy products were used in the making of these scrumptious holiday recipes, and you know what? You won't miss 'em. All the flavor, none of the guilt—so eat up!

33%

OF VEGETARIANS ARE VEGANS, ACCORDING TO THE VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP

Tried-and-true hits at any holiday gathering, these three vegan recipes have stood the test of time. We dare you to choose a favorite! The Pumpkin-Coconut Bisque ushers in the season with a subtle exotic kick. The Savory "Sausage" Rolls please not only the guests but the host, as they can be assembled with little fuss. And the eggless Perfect Potato Latkes are every bit as tasty as traditional Chanukah latkes, but they're not made with artery-clogging ingredients. What's not to love?

PHOTO BY RENEE COMET. STYLING BY LISA CHERKASKY. PROPS COURTESY OF GO MAMA GO!

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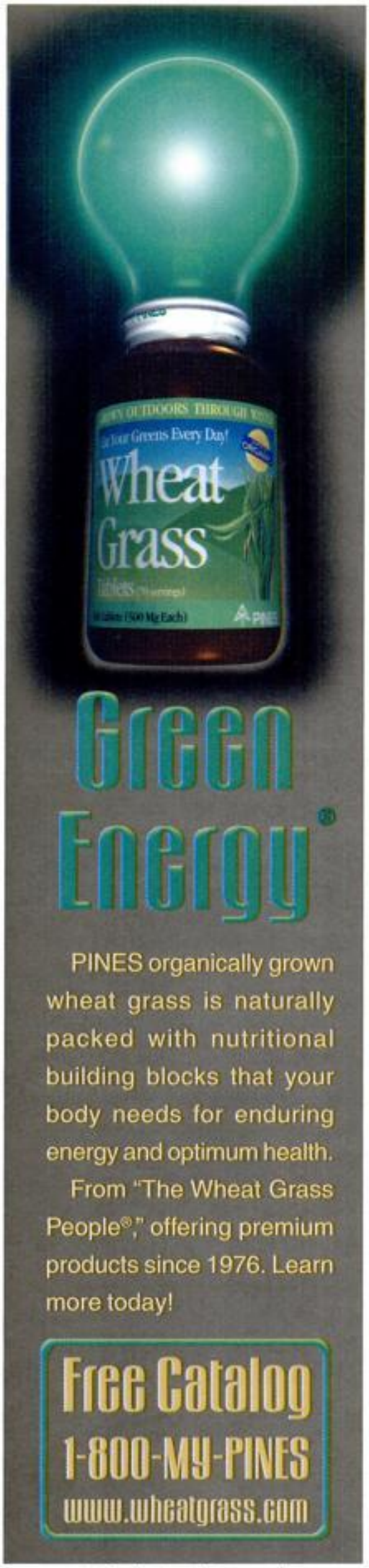
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PERFECT POTATO LATKES

Serves 8

Serve these delectable potato cakes with cinnamon-spiked applesauce and vegan sour cream.

4 cups peeled and quartered baking potatoes (about 4 medium)
1 medium-sized onion, quartered
½ 12.3-oz. pkg. lite silken tofu
¼ cup nutritional yeast
2½ Tbs. whole wheat flour
2 Tbs. whole grain yellow cornmeal
1 Tbs. egg replacer powder
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. sea salt
½ cup unflavored soymilk
½ cup mashed potato flakes
1 Tbs. olive oil

1. Preheat oven to 200F.
2. Grate potatoes in food processor or using small holes of hand grater. Spread on layered paper towels, and press out excess moisture. Grate onion; mix with potatoes in large bowl. Set aside.
3. Put tofu in food processor, and purée until smooth. Add yeast, flour, cornmeal, egg replacer, baking powder and salt. With motor running, pour soymilk through feed tube, and process until blended, 1 to 2 minutes.
4. Add tofu mixture, potato flakes and oil to potato mixture, and mix well. Coat large nonstick skillet with cooking spray, and heat about 30 seconds over medium heat. Add batter to pan in ¼ cupfuls. Cook latkes 3 minutes on each side, or until golden brown. Transfer to baking sheet, cover with foil and keep warm in oven. Repeat, re-spraying pan when necessary. Serve hot.

PER SERVING: 140 CAL; 6G PROT; 2.5G TOTAL FAT (0G SAT. FAT); 23G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 380MG SOD; 3G FIBER; 2G SUGARS

PUMPKIN-COCONUT BISQUE

Serves 4

Smooth and mysteriously piquant, this lush soup contains several Asian seasonings, yet is at home with any American meal. When buying Thai red curry paste, check the label—some contain fish or shrimp. Roasting enhances the pumpkin flavor, but you may omit the step.

1¾ cups pumpkin purée
2 Tbs. vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
1 Tbs. shredded fresh ginger
½ to 1 tsp. red curry paste, or to taste
1¾ cups light coconut milk
6 Tbs. frozen apple juice concentrate
½ cup vegetable stock
Salt to taste
½ cup toasted pumpkin seeds for garnish
1 cup garlic-flavored croutons for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 450F. Put pumpkin purée into ovenproof dish, and heat until edges brown, about 15 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, heat oil in large skillet or wok over medium heat, and sauté onion and ginger about 10 minutes. Add curry paste; sauté 2 minutes more. Put onion mixture and 1 cup roasted pumpkin purée into blender or food processor; add 1 cup coconut milk, and purée until smooth.
3. Pour mixture into saucepan, and stir in remaining pumpkin purée, coconut milk, apple juice, vegetable stock and salt. Heat 5 minutes. Garnish each serving with sprinkling of pumpkin seeds and croutons.

PER SERVING: 340 CAL; 11G PROT; 21G TOTAL FAT (5G SAT. FAT); 27G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 260MG SOD; 3G FIBER; 8G SUGARS

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SAVORY "SAUSAGE" ROLLS

Serves 8

These flaky rolls are perfect bake-and-slice appetizers. Adding a little lemon juice to the soymilk creates a delicious vegan alternative to buttermilk.

Filling

1 Tbs. olive oil
⅛ tsp. crushed red pepper, or to taste
1½ cups chopped red onion
1½ Tbs. minced garlic
1 14-oz. tube soy "sausage"
1 10-oz. pkg. frozen spinach, thawed, drained and pressed dry
¼ cup dry sherry
3 Tbs. chopped fresh thyme leaves
½ tsp. salt

Dough

½ cup plain soymilk
1 Tbs. lemon juice
1½ tsp. olive oil
2 cups whole wheat flour
2½ tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. sea salt
⅛ cup lite silken tofu
1 Tbs. brown rice syrup or maple syrup

1. Preheat oven to 350F.
2. To make Filling: Heat oil and crushed red pepper in nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic, and sauté 3 minutes. Add "sausage," breaking it up, and cook, stirring often, 5 minutes, or until "sausage" is lightly browned. Add spinach, dry sherry, chopped thyme leaves and salt. Reduce heat to low, and cook 5 minutes. Remove mixture from heat, and let cool.
3. To make Dough: Combine soymilk, lemon juice and olive oil in small container; set aside. Put flour, baking powder and salt into food processor, and process to mix. Add tofu and brown rice syrup, and process again to mix. With motor running, add soymilk mixture through feed tube, and process until well blended, about 1 to 2 minutes.
4. Turn dough onto lightly floured work surface. Lightly oil hands, and knead dough 3 minutes, or until smooth and elastic. Divide dough into 2 equal pieces.
5. Roll one piece of dough into 14x6-inch rectangle—dough should be about ⅛-inch thick. Spoon half of filling, about 1¾ cups, lengthwise over dough, leaving 1-inch border at short ends, and 1½-inch borders on each long side. Fold long sides of dough up and over filling, overlapping slightly to form long roll. Transfer roll, seam side down, onto large baking sheet. Tuck each end under to enclose filling. Repeat with remaining dough and filling, placing second roll on baking sheet.
6. Bake 30 to 40 minutes, or until lightly golden on bottom and top. Transfer rolls onto wire racks, and let cool slightly. Before serving, cut each roll into 12 slices. Rolls can be served warm or at room temperature.

PER SERVING: 270 CAL; 15G PROT; 8G TOTAL FAT (0G SAT. FAT); 35G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 710MG SOD; 7G FIBER; 4G SUGARS ■

Orange Cranberry Bread

INGREDIENTS
2 cups flour
1 cup **Florida Crystals Organic Cane Sugar**
1 1/2 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt
Juice and grated rind of 1 orange
2 tbsp shortening
Warm water (enough to make 3/4 cup, see below)
1 egg, well beaten
1 cup nuts, chopped almonds or pecans
1 cup dried or raw cranberries (if raw cranberries are used, use a grinder to cut up berries)

PREPARATION
Sift together first five ingredients. Combine juice, rind, shortening and warm water in a liquid measuring cup to equal 3/4 cup. Add egg. Blend liquid into dry ingredients and stir until moist. Add nuts and cranberries. Pour into greased 8 1/2" x 4 1/2" X 3" pan. Bake at 350° for 60 to 70 minutes. Cool, then serve.

SERVINGS: 1 large loaf or 2 small loaves.

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A SIMPLE *feast*

Celebrate Thanksgiving with a cornucopia of festive American dishes

Ahh, the first Thanksgiving! Pilgrims in steepled hats, sitting down with feather-dressed Native Americans to feast on turkey, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie.

Not exactly. Historians say that's a charming myth, cooked up 2 centuries later. Neither the Pilgrims nor Wampanoag Indians were dressed that way when they met to "rejoyce together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors," as one participant wrote. For that matter, who knows if they even had turkey? All we know for sure about the menu is that they had "much fowle" and "Indian Corne." The Pilgrims' barley crop was "indifferent" that year, and the peas "not worth the gathering." Another 50 years would pass before anyone boiled cranberries with sugar, and pumpkin pie hadn't been invented in 1621. Instead, the Pilgrims and their Native American guests probably enjoyed a steamed pudding made from whole grains, dried wild fruits and spices brought over from England.

The ways we celebrate Thanksgiving have evolved considerably since that first late-harvest feast. But this menu pays homage to those early foods—and yet still features dishes that are festive, colorful and scrumptious. This year, make a Cornucopia Compote or a Caramelized Sweet Potato and Red Onion Braid—or both! The oohs and ahhhs will follow.

Instead of the head of the table carving a bird, he or she can pass out individual compotes or slice and serve the braid. The ritual is the same. Only the entrée is different. The rest of this meal salutes homey farmhouse cooking—with a twist. Hot, yeasty Parker House–style rolls are now made with rapid-rise yeast and both whole wheat and white flours. The salad combines crisp greens, fresh pears, tangy blue cheese and toasted walnuts, all tossed with a contemporary wheat beer vinaigrette. And since you're already serving squash, why not skip the pumpkin pie or add a second dessert—a creamy cheesecake with a crown of cinnamon-spiced apples.

The Pilgrims would approve.

RECIPES Judith Fertig PHOTOGRAPHS Jacqueline Hopkins STYLING Frank Melodia PROP STYLING Karen Quatsoe

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MENU

PEAR AND WALNUT *salad*
with WHEAT BEER VINAIGRETTE

FARMHOUSE *rolls*

cornucopia COMPOTE

caramelized SWEET POTATO
and RED ONION BRAID

AUTUMN APPLE *cheesecake*

WINES

King Estate Pinot Gris

Foley Estates Pinot Noir

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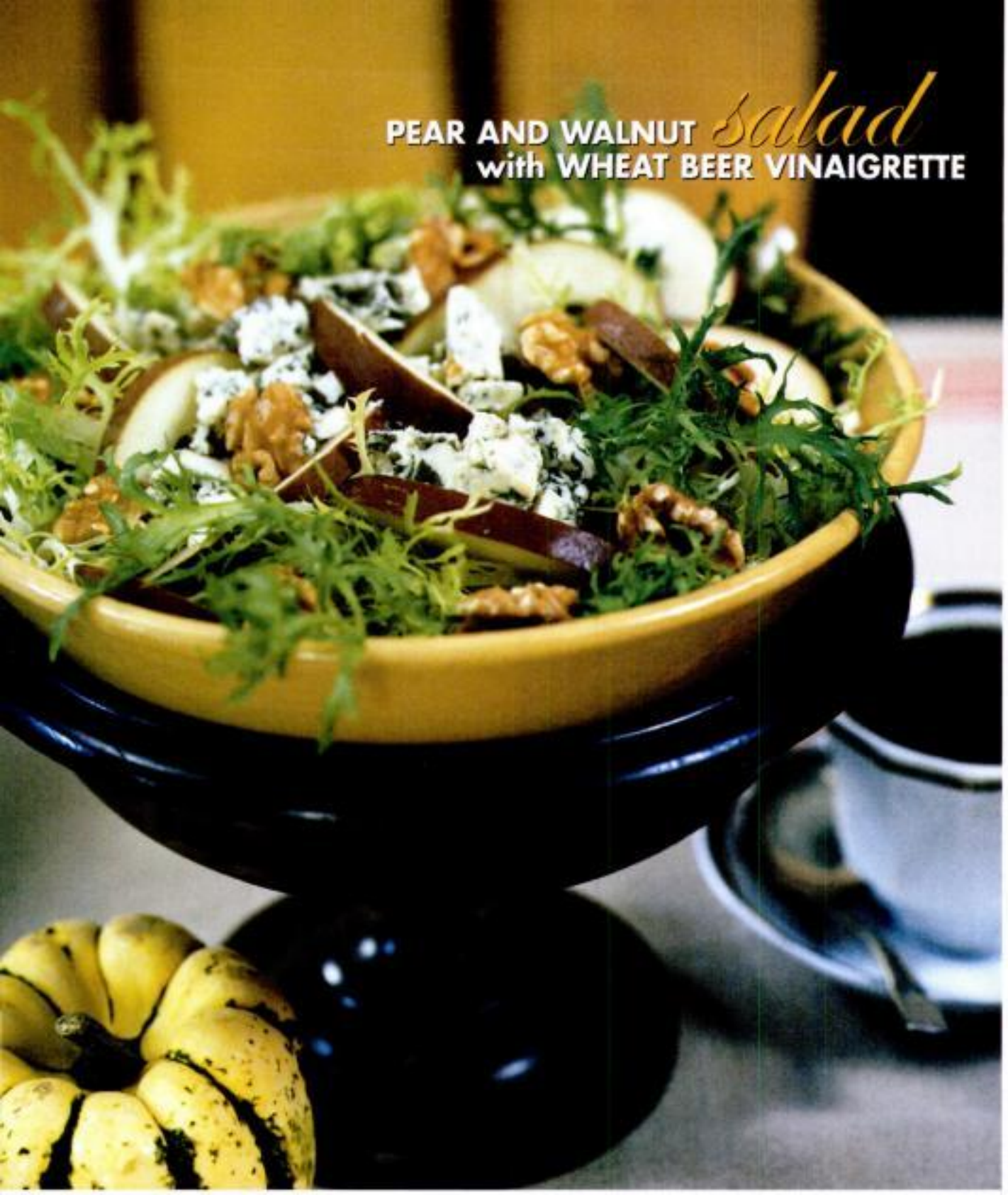

PEAR AND WALNUT SALAD WITH WHEAT BEER VINAIGRETTE

Serves 8
30 minutes or fewer

This is a lovely seasonal salad—with or without the blue cheese. Use your favorite microbrewed wheat beer for a low-fat vinaigrette with big flavor.

Vinaigrette

¾ cup wheat beer
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbs. wildflower or amber honey
1 Tbs. Dijon mustard
½ cup balsamic vinegar
½ cup vegetable stock
½ cup olive oil

Salad

8 cups assorted greens
3 to 4 ripe red-skinned pears, halved, cored and thinly sliced
6 oz. blue cheese or fresh goat cheese, crumbled, optional
½ cup toasted walnut halves

1. To make Vinaigrette: Put wheat beer in saucepan, and bring to a boil over high heat. Cook until it has reduced to ¼ cup, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and whisk in remaining ingredients. Set aside.
2. To make Salad: Arrange greens on 8 plates, and arrange pears on greens. Crumble blue cheese on top, if using, scatter with walnuts and drizzle each salad with Vinaigrette.

PER SERVING: 210 CAL; 3G PROT; 14G TOTAL FAT (1.5G SAT. FAT); 21G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 80MG SOD; 4G FIBER; 13G SUGARS

FARMHOUSE ROLLS

Serves 8

The wonderful Parker House–style rolls that grandmoms once baked can now be made more easily with rapid-rise yeast. They don't just look homemade, they *are* homemade. Yield, about 16.

¾ cup boiling water
⅓ cup vegetable shortening
1 large egg, beaten
¼ cup granulated sugar
½ tsp. salt
1½ cups unbleached all-purpose flour, or more as needed
1¼ tsp. rapid-rise yeast
1 cup whole wheat flour
2 Tbs. unsalted butter, melted

1. Pour boiling water over shortening in large bowl; let stand until lukewarm.
2. Using wooden spoon, beat egg, sugar, salt and ½ cup all-purpose flour into shortening. Beat in yeast until blended.
3. Beat in both flours, ½ cup at a time, alternating between all-purpose and whole wheat flour, until dough is stiff and does not cling to sides of bowl. Turn dough onto floured surface, and knead in any remaining flour. Knead until smooth and elastic, about 5 minutes.
4. Place dough in large oiled bowl, turning to coat. Cover with oiled plastic wrap, and let rise in warm place until doubled in bulk, about 1¼ hours. Or refrigerate dough to rise more slowly, at least 4 hours or overnight.
5. Preheat oven to 350F.
6. Punch dough down, and turn onto lightly floured surface. Using floured rolling pin, roll dough out to about ½-inch thick. Use 3-inch round biscuit or cookie cutter to cut circles. Repeat until dough is used up. Brush each circle with butter; fold in half, gently pressing edges together to close. Do not pinch edges to seal. Place rolls on large ungreased baking sheet. Cover loosely with plastic wrap; let rise until doubled in bulk, about 1 hour. Rolls can be refrigerated for up to 24 hours to rise before baking.
7. Bake 17 to 20 minutes, until slightly browned. Cool slightly on baking sheet.

PER SERVING: 270 CAL; 6G PROT; 12G TOTAL FAT (4G SAT. FAT); 36G CARB; 35MG CHOL; 155MG SOD; 3G FIBER; 7G SUGARS

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CORNUCOPIA COMPOTE

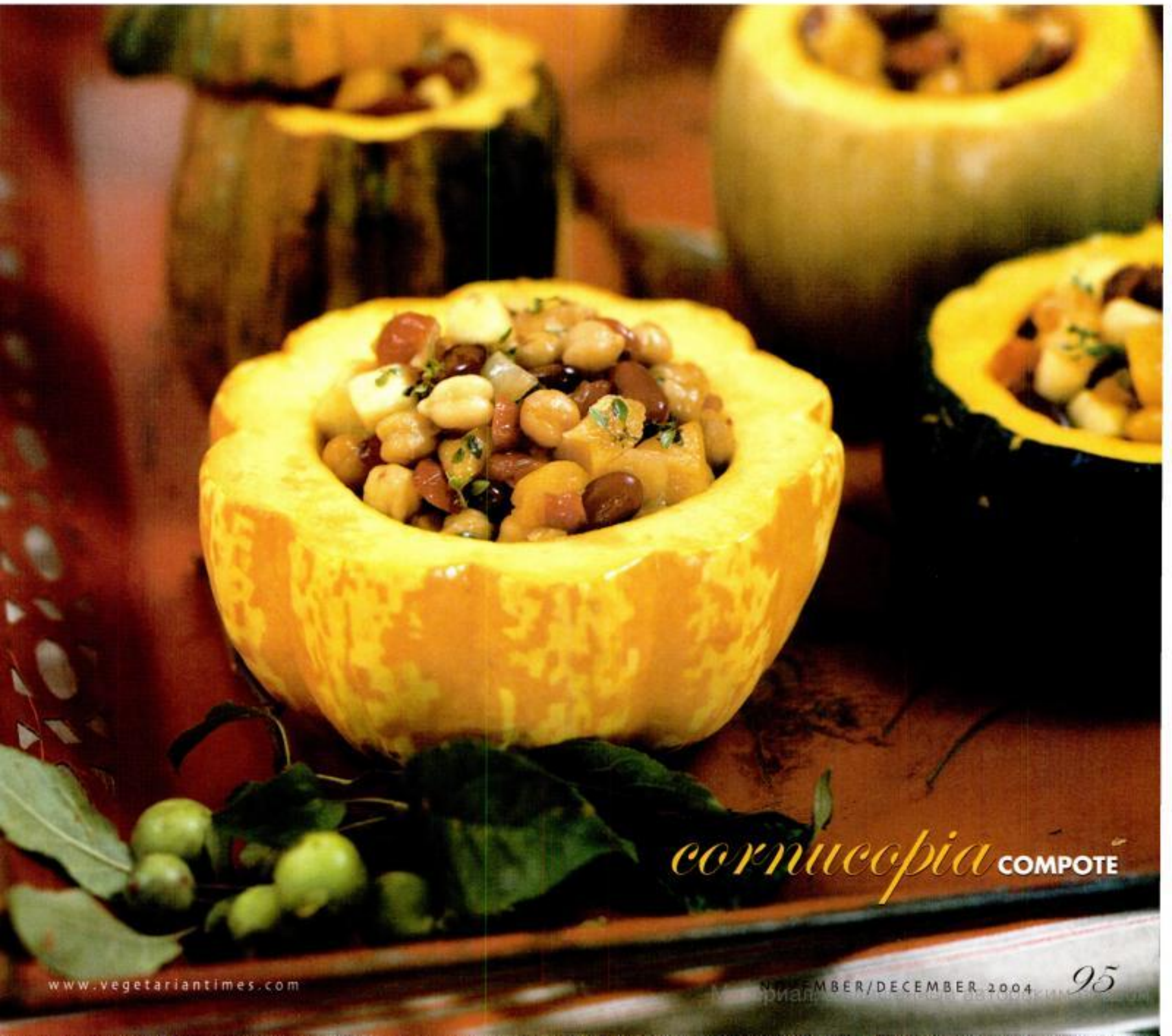
Serves 8

Served in acorn squashes, this savory compote will be the star of your Thanksgiving table. You can make the filling a day ahead, then stuff and bake the squashes on Thanksgiving Day.

2 Tbs. olive oil
2 medium-sized onions, thinly sliced
1 15.5-oz. can chickpeas, drained
About 3 cups red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
2 tart apples such as Granny Smith, peeled, cored and chopped
1 cup dried cranberries or dried red tart cherries
1 cup snipped dried apricots
⅓ cup port, brandy, or dry white or red wine
¼ cup honey
1 Tbs. fresh thyme leaves
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
8 small acorn squashes (about 1 lb. each), cut in half and seeded
Fresh thyme sprigs for garnish

1. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions, and sauté until medium brown, about 10 minutes. Stir in chickpeas, kidney beans, apples, dried fruits, port and honey, and bring to a simmer. Remove from heat. Season with thyme leaves, salt and freshly ground black pepper. (Filling can be made to this point, covered and refrigerated up to 3 days.)
2. Preheat oven to 350F.
3. Pack squashes with filling, place on baking tray and bake, uncovered, 25 minutes. Cover with lids, and bake 20 to 30 minutes more, until squashes are tender. Garnish with thyme, and serve.

PER SERVING: 510 CAL; 13G PROT; 5G TOTAL FAT (0.5G SAT. FAT); 108G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 620MG SOD; 17G FIBER; 44G SUGARS



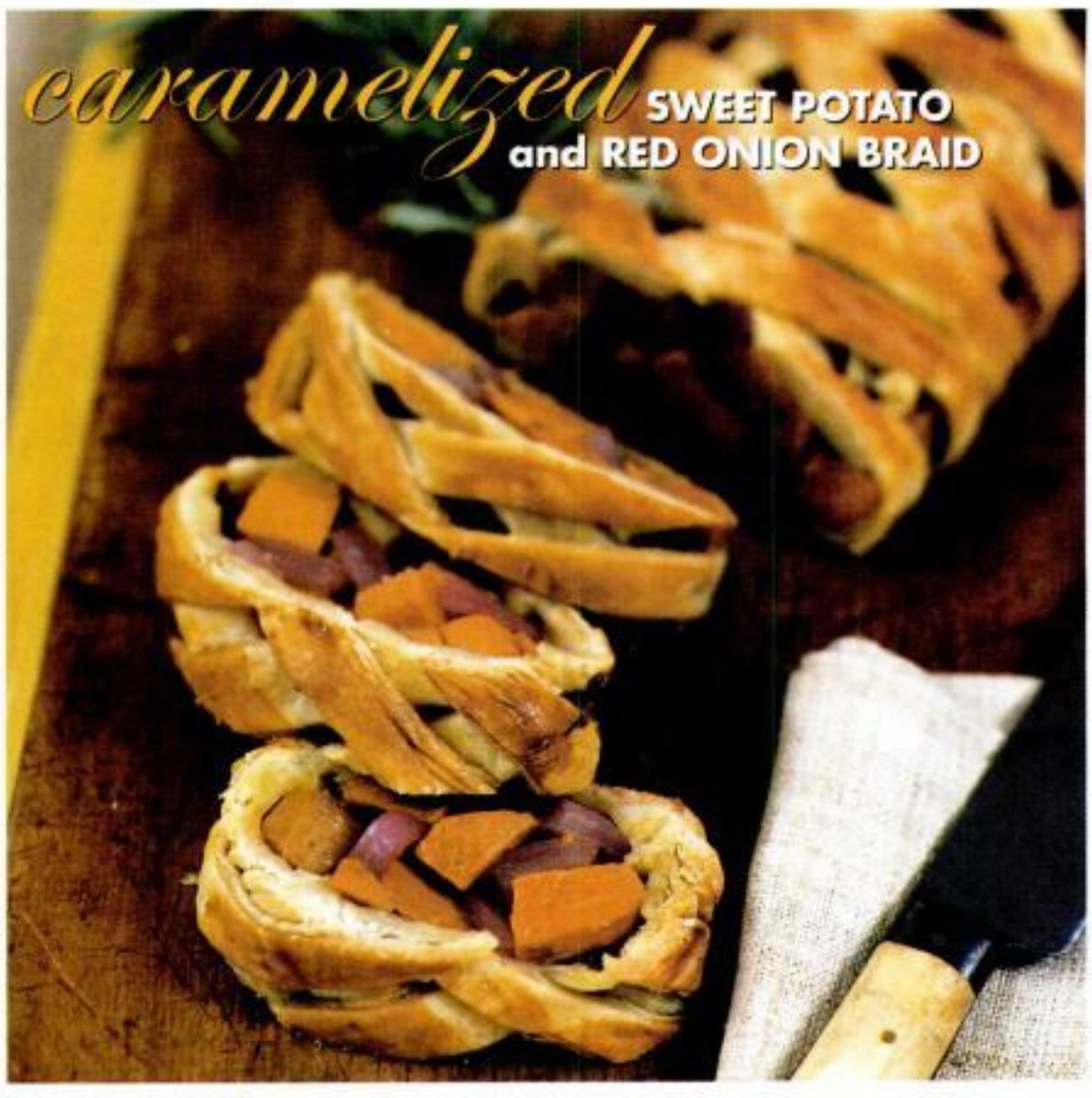
CARAMELIZED SWEET POTATO AND RED ONION BRAID

Serves 8

This tastes wonderful served hot, room temperature or cold. If you're expecting a crowd, the recipe can be doubled.

1 large sweet potato (1 lb.), peeled and cubed
3 Tbs. olive oil
1 medium-sized red onion, peeled
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tsp. fresh snipped rosemary leaves, or 1 tsp. dried
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1 sheet from a 17.25-oz. pkg. frozen puff pastry, thawed
1 large egg, lightly beaten
Fresh rosemary branches for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 375F.
2. Put sweet potato in bowl. Drizzle with 1½ tablespoons olive oil, and spread potato cubes in single layer on half of large roasting pan. Slice red onion vertically then horizontally into ¼-inch-wide pieces. Toss with remaining oil in bowl, and spread in single layer on other half of roasting pan. Bake 25 to 30 minutes, tossing potato and onions separately several times, until vegetables start to soften and take on color. Transfer both to bowl; toss to blend with cheese, garlic, rosemary, salt and pepper. Let cool.
3. Increase oven temperature to 425F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper.
4. Unfold and roll puff pastry sheet out to 12x9 inches on lightly floured surface; transfer to baking sheet. Spoon filling down center into 9x4-inch mound, leaving 2 inches of dough at short ends and 3 inches on each side. Fold top and bottom edges over filling. Cut pastry on sides into diagonal strips about ½-inch wide. Fold strips alternately from each side over filling to create lattice or braided effect. Brush egg over pastry.
5. Bake 25 to 30 minutes, or until puffed and golden. Cool on wire rack. Garnish with rosemary sprigs, and serve.
PER SERVING: 250 CAL; 5G PROT; 15G TOTAL FAT (3G SAT. FAT); 22G CARB; 25MG CHOL; 260MG SOD; 2G FIBER; 5G SUGARS



AUTUMN APPLE CHEESECAKE

Serves 12

For the best taste, let the flavors develop by covering and chilling the cheesecake at least 4 hours before serving. A sprig of white currants adds a festive touch.

Crust
1 cup graham cracker crumbs
¾ cup finely chopped pecans
3 Tbs. granulated sugar
½ tsp. ground cinnamon
2 Tbs. unsalted butter, melted

Filling
16 oz. low-fat cream cheese, softened
½ cup granulated sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 large eggs

Topping
4 cups peeled and thinly sliced Jonathan or Granny Smith apples
½ tsp. ground cinnamon
½ cup granulated sugar
½ cup chopped pecans
Confectioners' sugar for dusting

1. Preheat oven to 325F. Spray 8-inch springform baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. To make Crust: Mix all ingredients in bowl, and press onto bottom of pan. Bake 10 minutes, remove from oven and let cool. Leave oven on.
3. To make Filling: Beat cream cheese, sugar and vanilla on medium speed until well blended. Blend in eggs one at a time. Scrape down sides of mixing bowl with rubber spatula, and pour mixture over crust.
4. To make Topping: Put sliced apples in bowl, and toss with cinnamon and sugar. Spoon apple mixture over filling, and sprinkle top with pecans.
5. Bake 1¼ hours, or until center is set. Let cheesecake cool before removing it from springform pan.
6. Transfer cheesecake to serving plate. Dust top lightly with confectioners' sugar before serving.
PER SERVING: 320 CAL; 7G PROT; 19G TOTAL FAT (7G SAT. FAT); 32G CARB; 60MG CHOL; 170MG SOD; 2G FIBER; 24G SUGARS ■

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AUTUMN APPLE *cheesecake*

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WHAT EVERYONE WANTS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

recipes that are IMPRESSIVE, DELICIOUS and DECEPTIVELY EASY!

ONE GREAT MENU

Ask people about their favorite holiday memories, and they rarely mention fancy gifts, party outfits or travel traumas. What people remember is what really matters: good times with friends and family. Precisely because these get-togethers are so special, the food should be too. But with all the extra demands the holidays bring, who has time to figure out several menus? Or make food that requires hours of fussing? The answer: Two super-easy menus in one. We provide the recipes, you choose how to serve them—as finger food for a cocktail party or a casual but classy dinner for 8. Or do both, because the second time around, these already simple recipes are a *total* snap. You can host a bunch of friends one night, have a relaxed dinner party the next and not feel fried afterward. For the cocktail party, pass trays of appetizers, or just set up a mini buffet: Add small plates, and let guests serve themselves. To transform the recipes into an easy 3-course dinner, see the menu, next page. And to make things even simpler, most of these dishes can be made ahead. That means you can join the party—a present to your guests and yourself. You deserve it.

RECIPES Lorna Sass
PHOTOGRAPHS Jacqueline Hopkins
STYLING Jee Levin
PROP STYLING Karen Quatsoe

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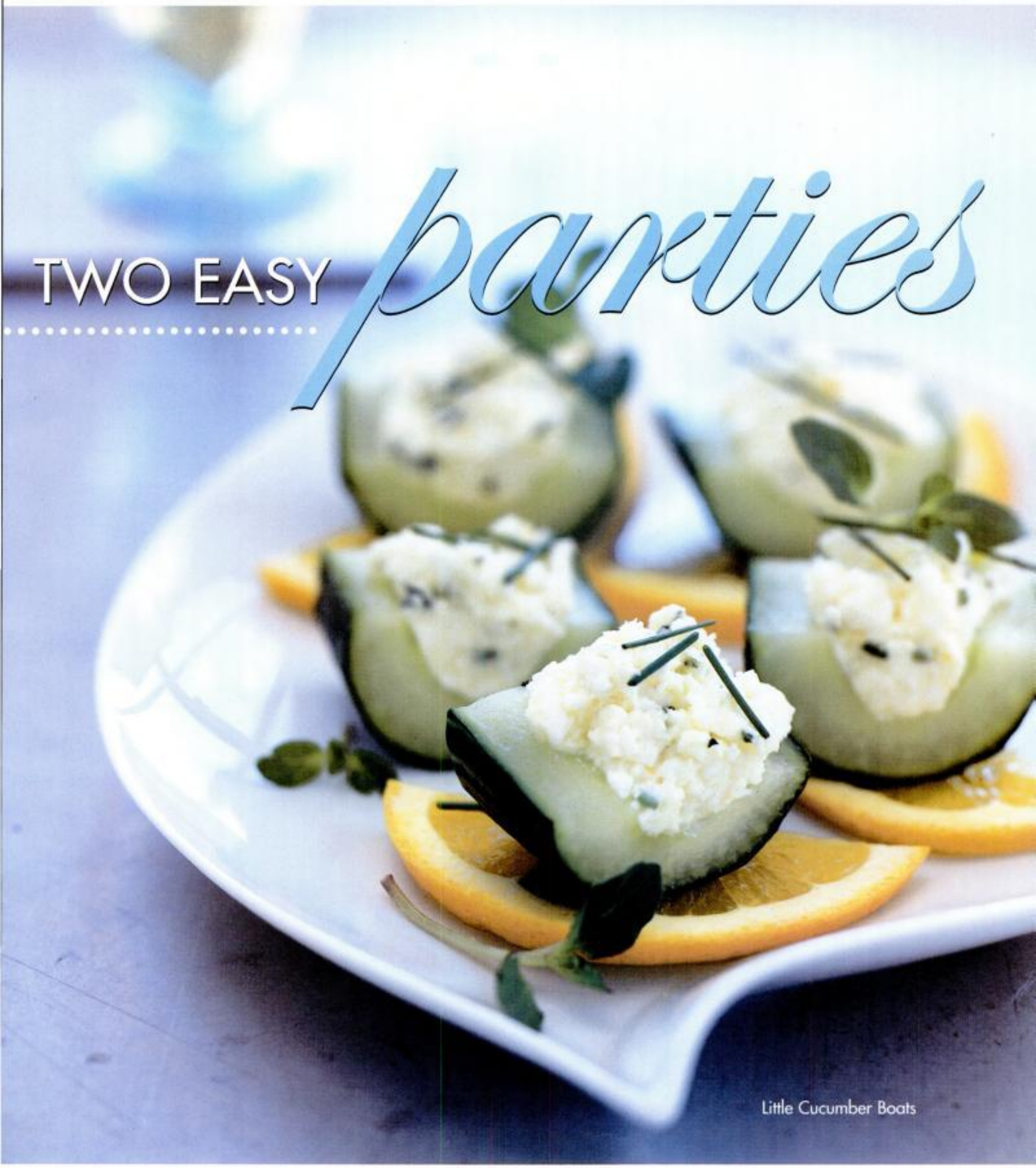
TWO EASY *parties*



Little Cucumber Boats

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PESTO PORTOBELLOS

Makes 8 dinner servings, 32 appetizers

These delicious stuffed mushrooms make a fabulous entrée. The hazelnuts are optional but add a nice crunch. To serve as an appetizer, cut each mushroom into 4 pie-shaped pieces.

8 large portobello caps, about 6 inches round
2 Tbs. olive oil
Salt to taste
⅔ cup seasoned breadcrumbs
⅔ cup prepared basil pesto
1 Tbs. grated lemon zest from 2 large lemons
1 Tbs. balsamic vinegar
¼ cup finely chopped hazelnuts, optional
⅓ cup grated Romano or Parmesan cheese
Chopped parsley or mint for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 450F. Line two shallow roasting pans or baking sheets with aluminum foil.
2. Gently wipe mushroom caps with damp towel. Use paring knife to pry out any bits of stems; chop stems finely.
3. Lightly brush tops of caps with oil. Set caps, gill sides up, in prepared pans. Sprinkle lightly with salt.
4. Combine chopped stems, breadcrumbs, pesto, lemon zest, vinegar and hazelnuts, if using. Spoon about 2 rounded tablespoons of topping into each mushroom.
5. Roast mushrooms on top rack 5 minutes. Switch to bottom rack. Continue roasting until tender, 10 to 15 minutes total. Sprinkle grated cheese liberally on each mushroom, and garnish with parsley. Serve warm or at room temperature.

PER SERVING: 230 CAL; 6G PROT; 17G TOTAL FAT (3.5G SAT. FAT); 11G CARB; 10MG CHOL; 500MG SOD; 2G FIBER; 2G SUGARS

SWEET POTATO WEDGES WITH ROSEMARY

Makes 8 dinner servings, 6 dozen appetizers

The soy gives the potatoes a nice color, and the chili powder provides a little kick. These are best hot. To serve as a side dish, divide the potatoes into 8 portions, and garnish with fresh rosemary.

entrée & side

PESTO PORTOBELLO & SWEET POTATO WEDGES

3½ lb. sweet potatoes
3 Tbs. olive oil
1½ tsp. chili powder
1½ tsp. low-sodium soy sauce
Salt to taste
1 heaping Tbs. chopped fresh rosemary

1. Preheat oven to 450F. Line two shallow roasting pans or rimmed baking sheets with aluminum foil.
2. Halve potatoes crosswise, then lengthwise, and cut each half into 4 sticks.
3. Mix oil, chili powder and soy sauce in bowl. Drizzle over potatoes, and toss to coat. Arrange skin side down in one layer in baking pans. Sprinkle with salt.
4. Roast 12 minutes. Turn slices, and roast until tender, 8 to 12 minutes more. Add salt, if needed. Toss in rosemary.

PER SERVING: 160 CAL; 3G PROT; 5G TOTAL FAT (0.5G SAT. FAT); 25G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 75MG SOD; 4G FIBER; 10G SUGARS

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DINNER FOR 8 menu

first course
Egg and "Caviar" Canapés

Vegetable-Bean Spirals

Little Cucumber Boats

entrée & side
Pesto Portobellos

Sweet Potato Wedges with Rosemary

dessert
Sliced Pears with Orange-Chocolate Dip

Sweet and Spicy Pecans

EGG AND "CAVIAR" CANAPÉS

Makes 8 dinner servings, 24 appetizers
30 minutes or fewer

The garlicky olive spread makes this appetizer anything but ordinary. Even your most sophisticated guests will keep having "just one more."

1 clove garlic, chopped
6 oz. pitted black oil-cured olives (1 heaping cup)
6 extra-large eggs, hard-cooked and peeled
24 slices whole wheat baguette, cut ¼-inch thick
1 bunch chives cut into 3-inch lengths
Tiny dill sprigs for garnish

1. Put garlic into feed tube of food processor with processor running, and chop. Add olives, and process to coarse paste, scraping down sides.
2. Trim off short (yolkless) ends of eggs. Cut each egg crosswise into 4 slices.
3. To assemble, spread olive paste on each slice of bread. Crisscross 2 chives on top. Set one slice of egg in middle. Press dill sprigs into yolk. Divide among 8 salad plates, or arrange on party platter.

PER SERVING: 50 CAL; 2G PROT; 3G TOTAL FAT (0.5G SAT. FAT); 4G CARB; 60MG CHOL; 95MG SOD; 0G FIBER; 0G SUGARS

VEGETABLE-BEAN SPIRALS

Makes 8 dinner servings, 20-24 appetizers

This spicy blend of black beans and crisp vegetables is simply rolled in tortillas, then sliced to create pinwheels.

Bean Mixture
1 15-oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed
3 to 4 Tbs. prepared salsa
¼ cup packed cilantro leaves and tender stems
Salt to taste

Vegetable Spirals
4 9- to-10-inch spinach tortillas
1⅓ cups packed finely shredded red cabbage
4 thin carrot sticks, about 8 inches long and ½-inch wide
4 strips red bell pepper, about ¼-inch wide
8 slices ripe, firm Hass avocado, sprinkled with juice of ½ lime

1. To make Bean Mixture: In food processor, blend beans, 3 tablespoons salsa and cilantro into thick paste. Add more salsa, if needed for spreadable mixture. Add salt.
2. To make Vegetable Spirals: Using spatula, spread 3 tablespoons bean mixture on a tortilla, leaving about ½ inch around edges. Sprinkle on ¼ of cabbage, and gently press in. Place a carrot stick horizontally about 1 inch from bottom of tortilla, and place 1 strip red bell pepper above it. Arrange 2 slices avocado, end to end, on top of carrot.
3. Wrap bottom edge of tortilla over vegetables, and roll tightly. Moisten top edge lightly with bean paste or water to seal. Gently press roll to shape it into log. Fill and roll remaining tortillas.
4. To serve, set each roll seam side down on cutting board. Use sharp knife to trim off edges. Hold roll firmly, and use gentle sawing motion to cut into 5 or 6 pieces, making every other slice on the diagonal. Divide among 8 salad plates, or arrange on party platter, diagonal sides up.

PER SERVING: 50 CAL; 2G PROT; 2G TOTAL FAT (0G SAT. FAT); 7G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 90MG SOD; 2G FIBER; 1G SUGARS

LITTLE CUCUMBER BOATS

Makes 8 dinner servings, 24 appetizers
30 minutes or fewer

These are simple to prepare but look fancy. Use the long, ridged cucumbers (known as English, Dutch, hothouse or seedless) because they contain less water and fewer seeds.

1 seedless cucumber, about 1 foot long
7 oz. feta cheese
1 Tbs. sour cream
2 Tbs. orange juice
1 Tbs. finely chopped mint
1 Tbs. finely snipped chives
1½ tsp. orange zest
Salt to taste
Chopped chives for garnish
2 juice oranges, thinly sliced and pitted for garnish

1. Trim ends of cucumber, and cut in half crosswise, then lengthwise. Scoop out seeds. Blot cut sides with paper towel.
2. Crumble feta into bowl. Add sour cream, orange juice, mint, chives, orange zest and salt; mash with fork. Add a little water, if needed—mixture should be more creamy than crumbly.
3. Mound filling into cucumber halves. Cut stuffed cucumber into 1-inch pieces.
4. Place on orange slices, and garnish with additional chives. Divide among 8 salad plates, or arrange on party platter.

PER SERVING: 25 CAL; 1G PROT; 2G TOTAL FAT (1.5G SAT. FAT); 1G CARB; 10MG CHOL; 95MG SOD; 0G FIBER; 1G SUGARS

first course
3 APPETIZERS

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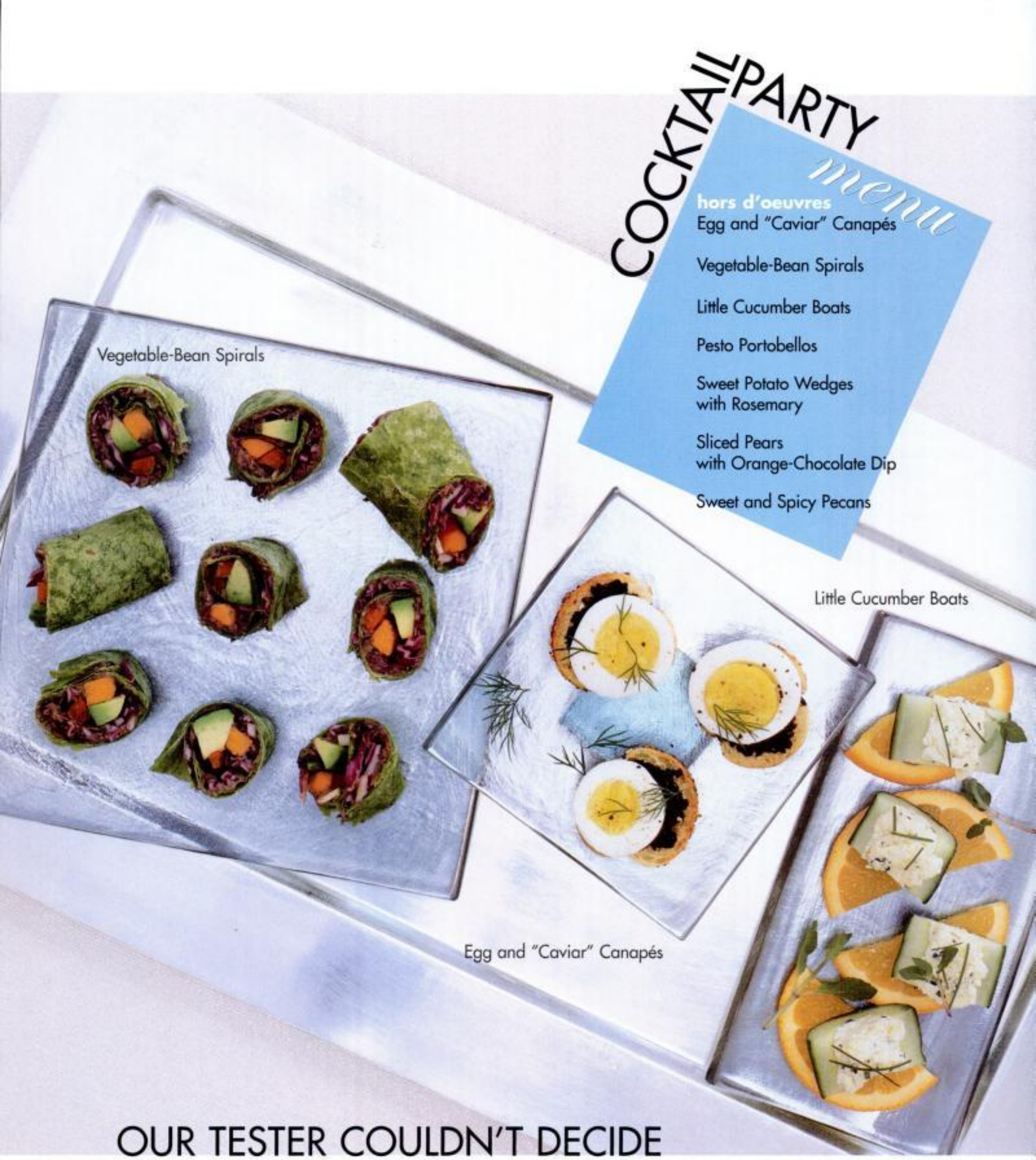

OUR TESTER COULDN'T DECIDE

WHAT HE LIKED MORE about these recipes: HOW GOOD THEY WERE or HOW FAST THEY WENT TOGETHER

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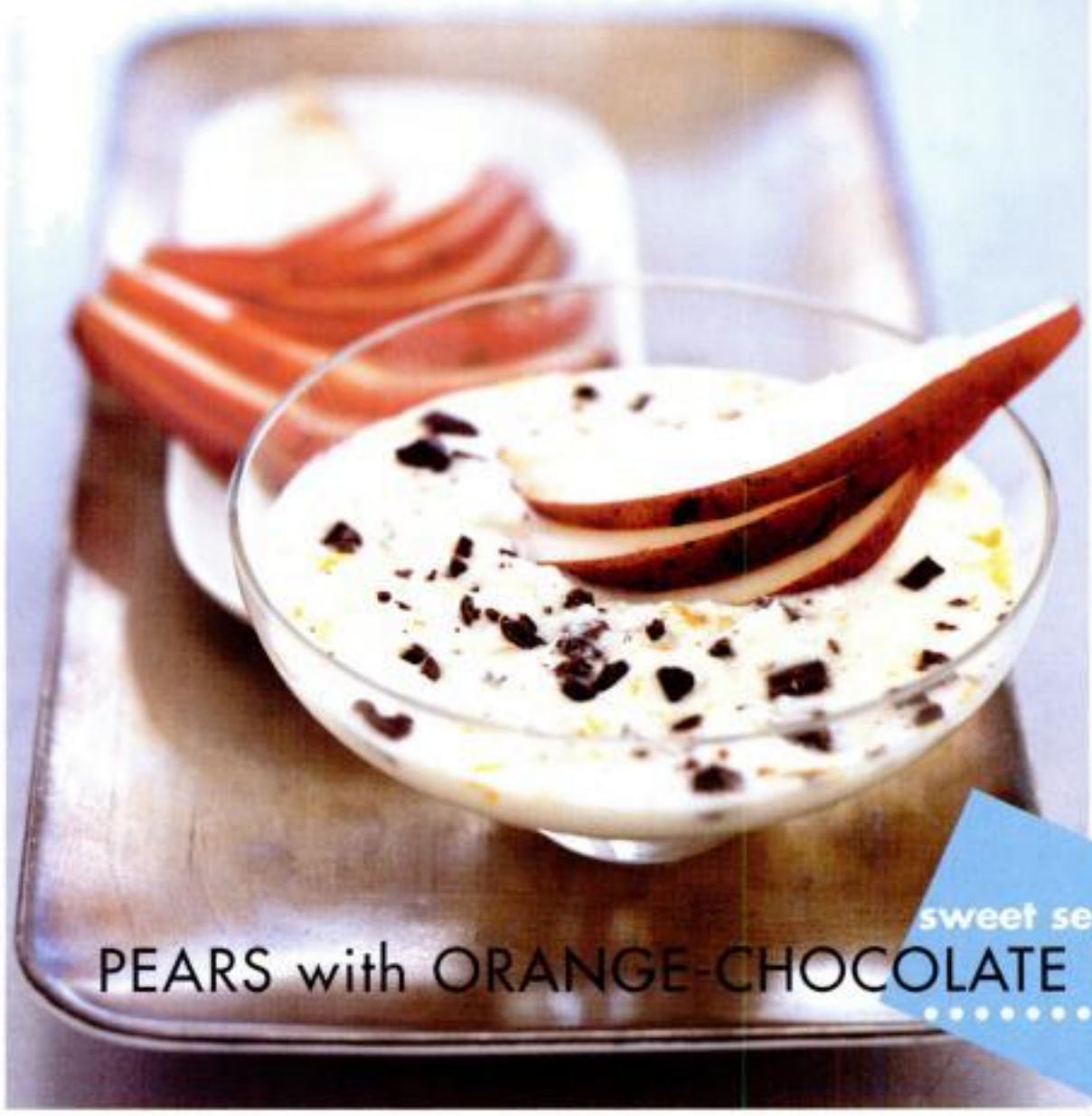

sweet send-off

PEARS with ORANGE-CHOCOLATE DIP & SPICY PECANS

SLICED PEARS WITH ORANGE-CHOCOLATE DIP

Makes 8 dinner servings, 16-20 appetizers
30 minutes or fewer

If serving the pears on a buffet, cut into ¼-inch slices, and toss in a large bowl with lemon juice to prevent browning. Put the dip in a serving bowl on a platter, and surround it with the pears.

1 15-oz. container low-fat ricotta
3 Tbs. orange marmalade
2 Tbs. orange liqueur
¼ cup finely chopped semisweet or bittersweet chocolate
4 large pears, preferably red Bartlett
1 lemon, halved

1. Mix ricotta, marmalade, liqueur and chocolate in bowl until combined.
2. Slice each pear in half lengthwise, scoop out core and make ¼-inch slices from round end almost to stem. Place pear halves cut side down on plates. Fan out slices; sprinkle with lemon juice. Place 3 tablespoons of dip on each plate, and fan pear half on top. Serve with bowl of Sweet and Spicy Pecans.

PER SERVING: 150 CAL; 7G PROT; 5G TOTAL FAT (2.5G SAT. FAT); 22G CARB; 15MG CHOL; 70MG SOD; 2G FIBER; 14G SUGARS

SWEET AND SPICY PECANS

Makes 2½ cups

Crunchy and slightly sweet, these pecans make a great dessert treat. Double the recipe, and you'll have an instant treat on hand for surprise holiday guests.

1 Tbs. butter or peanut oil
2 Tbs. dark corn syrup
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. cayenne
2½ cups pecan halves

1. Preheat oven to 250F. Line rimmed baking tray with aluminum foil.
2. Melt butter in saucepan over medium heat. Stir in corn syrup, 1 tablespoon water, salt, cinnamon and cayenne. Remove from heat, add nuts and toss to coat. Spread nuts in one layer on tray.
3. Bake 15 minutes. Stir nuts, and continue baking, stirring and reversing trays every 15 minutes until nuts are crisp, 35 to 40 minutes total. Transfer nuts to large platter to cool. Will keep in airtight container up to 7 days.

PER SERVING: 230 CAL; 3G PROT; 23G TOTAL FAT (2.5G SAT. FAT); 8G CARB; 5MG CHOL; 160MG SOD; 3G FIBER; 5G SUGARS ■

WINE FINDS

WHETHER YOU'RE USING THESE RECIPES FOR A HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE or an easy dinner party, kick off the evening with an icy glass of Domaine Chandon's sparkling Blanc de Noirs. Later, offer your guests a Pinot Noir from the King Estate in Oregon—it's excellent with the Pesto Portobello mushrooms.

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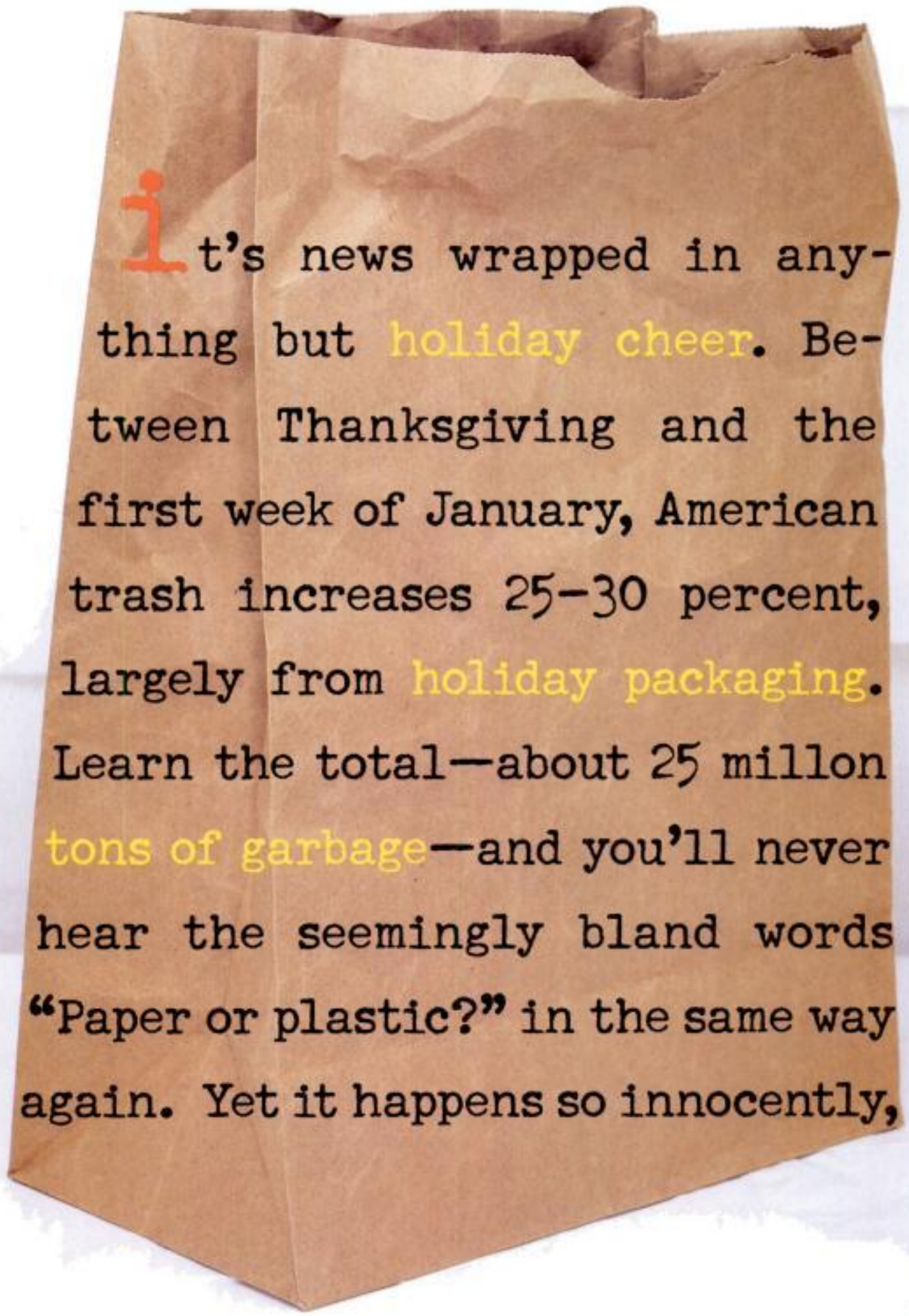
paper or



It's news wrapped in anything but holiday cheer. Between Thanksgiving and the first week of January, American trash increases 25–30 percent, largely from holiday packaging. Learn the total—about 25 millon tons of garbage—and you'll never hear the seemingly bland words "Paper or plastic?" in the same way again. Yet it happens so innocently,

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plastic?

in thousands of scenarios like this one: it's been a long, cold night, but you've finally found just the right Christmas tree. The salesman has sawed off the base and slung the tree onto the top of your car, and while you wait to pay, some kind soul hands you a steaming cup of coffee. You down it in minutes, toss the Styrofoam cup into a trash can and go home. Three weeks later, after the presents have been unwrapped

WORDS Daniel Imoff PHOTOGRAPHS Laura Johansen

and the ornaments put away for another year, you drag the tree to a discreet corner of the yard. There it will slowly biodegrade, nourishing the soil where, 6 months from now, grass will grow and flowers bloom.

But that Styrofoam cup—one of millions tossed every day—will stay as it is today for years. By some estimates, it could survive Saint Peter's in Rome.

The same can be said for the aluminum pie tins you filled with pumpkin and apples. And the red foil gift bag in which you wrapped Fido's new chew toy, or dozens of other seasonal items that have a shelf expectancy of 6 months and a landfill expectancy of centuries.

Overpackaging

it's

Consider this: At least a third of America's municipal solid waste is composed of the paper, plastic, cardboard, cellophane and Styrofoam in which we package the stuff of our lives. We throw out at least 300 pounds of packaging per person per year. And very little of it biodegrades.

Food packaging—20 percent of which is made of plastic—is a $105 billion industry in the United States, and growing. Between 1990 and 1997, plastic packaging grew 5 times faster by weight than did the plastic materials collected for recycling.

And just because you put packaging in your recycling bin or took it to a recycling center doesn't guarantee that it will be recycled. Recycled materials must compete with nonrecycled ones, and when the cost of using the former exceeds the latter, many items in curbside bins or taken to centers end up in landfills anyway. Especially plastics.

Our Need for Speed

Much of what goes into recycling bins is a by-product of our escalating desire for convenience. In the 1930s, it took 2.5 hours to prepare a meal; by the 1990s, about 15 minutes. We have packaged foods to thank—and blame. Consider the single-use container; the smaller the container, the greater the waste, and a great deal of single-use containers end up in recycling bins. (Just check your own.)

The single-use container of bottled water reflects our growing health-consciousness, and our desire to drink something besides soft drinks on picnics and bike rides. But the environmental impact of bottled water may far outweigh its gains in health and safety. Transportation costs alone are astronomical since 25 percent of bottled water is consumed outside of its country of origin. Worse, some imported water is from countries with purity standards weaker than our own. Thirty-three percent of brands tested by the Natural Resources Defense Council in 1999 contained contaminants, including arsenic and *E. coli*.

www.vegetariantimes.com
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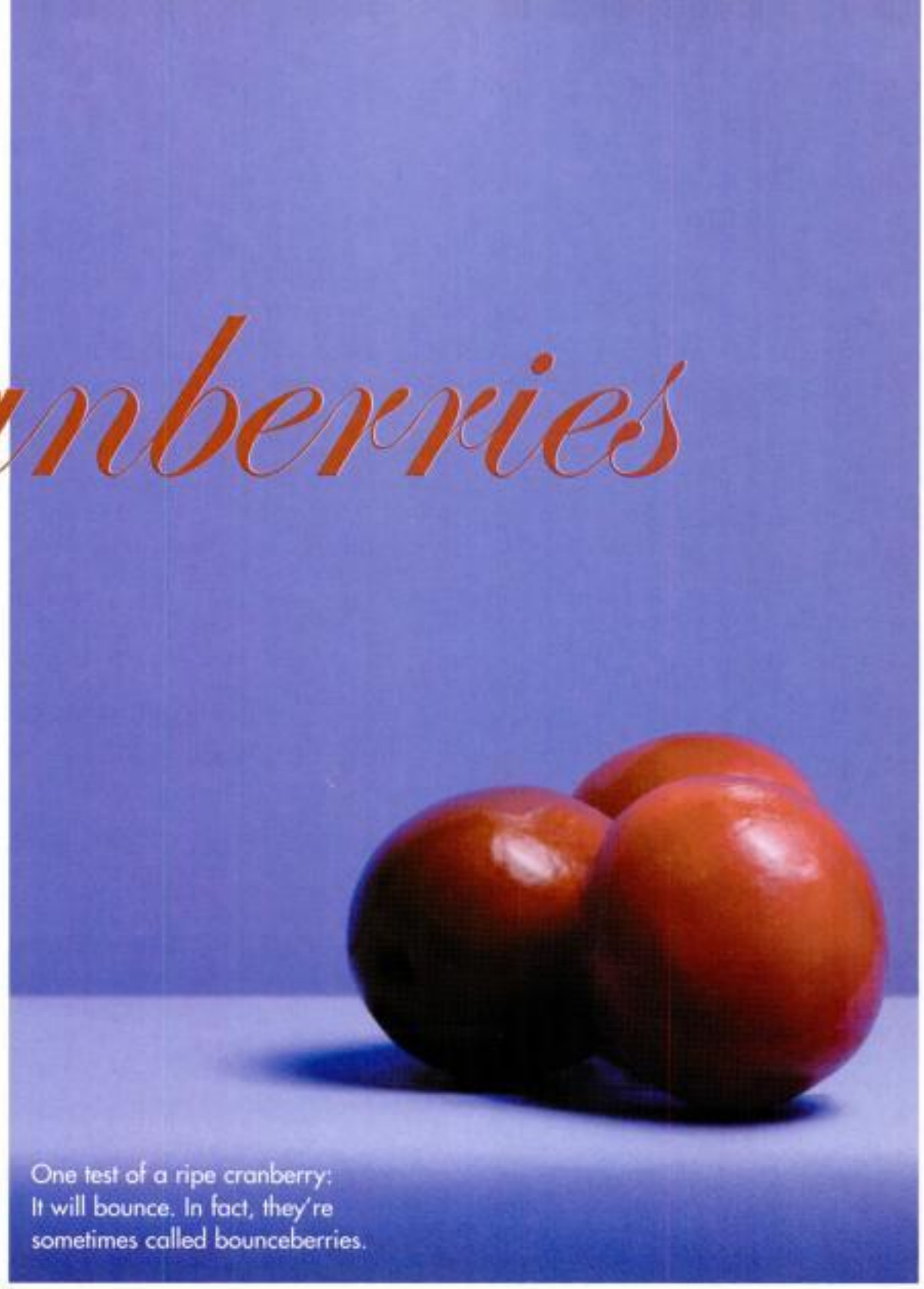
1 FOOD 5 WAYS

WHAT TO EAT NOW *cranberries*

Distinct, delicious and amazingly versatile . . . and it's unusual for such a flavor powerhouse to be so powerfully good for you, too

BY JOYCE PIOTROWSKI



One test of a ripe cranberry: It will bounce. In fact, they're sometimes called bounceberries.

Among berries, the cranberry is an anomaly. It's not a tender, sweet and juicy product of sun-warmed summer fields. It's not picked and popped into the mouth. In fact, it's never savored fresh. No, the cranberry is firm and tart, not ripening to red until cold fall days start to set in. The berry reveals its ruby color at the last possible moment and clings to the bush as if anticipating the harsh winter to come. Its tartness jolts and warms the senses, enlivens other fruits and makes this native-born American berry perfectly suited for bracing cold-weather dishes.

Fresh cranberries traditionally appear shortly before Thanksgiving when you can't miss the heaped-up poly bags of merry berries crowding the produce section of every grocery store in town. But they'll be gone all too soon, so stock up. Cranberries last up to 2 months in the fridge. They also freeze well (for as long as a year) and maintain their firmness afterward. No need to fuss or thaw. Just rinse them well with running water, and use as if they were fresh. Industry Web sites also say that frozen presliced cranberries are now available for tossing into breads and muffins. We haven't seen any yet, but keep your eyes open for these.

Fresh or frozen, feel free to use cranberries abundantly—at just 44 calories a cupful, why not? Besides, they're a true health food, despite being almost 90 percent water. The berries and the tangy juice they produce are loaded with disease-fighting antioxidants—some potent enough to have cancer-taming potential. That's not all. Cranberries also have antibacterial properties that intrigue and impress scientists. Most famously (among females, at least): drinking cranberry juice is now a proven way to treat urinary tract infections and fend off future trouble. A glass a day usually does the trick, though there's some indication that two may be better. In addition, cranberries have other antibacterial agents that deter gum disease and plaque, and even inhibit stomach ulcers. They also appear to help keep arteries healthy.

All that and these bright berries add rich color and a one-of-a-kind flavor to almost any food you can imagine . . . as you're about to discover on these pages.

CRANBERRY PHOTO BY MARK WEISS; FOOD PHOTOS BY RENÉE COMET

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PURÉED CRANBERRY SOUP

Serves 10
30 minutes or fewer

The color of this soup is a gorgeous burgundy, perfect for a holiday dinner. It's both slightly sweet and slightly tart, and it's meant as an appetizer—so serve it in small cups, not large bowls. It's equally good hot or cold. Add more sugar if you prefer a sweeter taste.

3 cups fresh or frozen cranberries, rinsed well and stemmed
5 cups organic cherry juice or cran/cherry juice
1 cup granulated sugar or sugar substitute
¼ tsp. ground cloves
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. ground white pepper
1 tsp. almond extract, optional
2 Tbs. cornstarch mixed with 2 Tbs. water
½ cup dried cranberries
1½ cups low-fat sour cream for garnish, optional
10 small mint sprigs, optional

1. Put cranberries in 3-quart saucepan. Add juice, sugar, cloves, cinnamon, pepper and almond extract, if using. Bring to a boil over medium heat, cover and reduce heat to low. Cook 15 minutes.
2. Put soup in blender, and purée. Strain, put into saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat. Add cornstarch mixture; stir well. Add dried cranberries, and cook 5 minutes.
3. Serve with dollop of sour cream and sprig of mint for garnish, if using.

PER SERVING: 330 CAL; 0G PROT; 0G TOTAL FAT (0G SAT. FAT); 83G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 25MG SOD; 3G FIBER; 75G SUGARS

Puréed Cranberry Soup

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5 SIBI'S CRUSTLESS CRANBERRY-PECAN PIE

Serves 12

This crustless pie is a simple farm recipe that starts with the most basic of staples: flour, sugar, butter and eggs. It's perfect for the holidays since it may be made a day or two ahead and kept in a cool place until needed; besides, it's very moist and easier to slice when cool. The recipe also works well with dried cranberries, blueberries or pitted sour cherries. It can be baked in an 8-inch pie plate and cut in thin wedges, or in a 9-inch square cake pan and served in thick slices, or in a rectangular pan, as shown, and spooned out. Dust a little confectioners' sugar on top if you like.

¾ cup melted unsalted butter or soy margarine
1½ cups granulated sugar
3 large eggs or ¾ cup egg substitute
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1¼ cups sifted whole wheat pastry flour
1½ cups fresh or frozen cranberries
1 cup finely chopped pecans

1. Preheat oven to 375F. Grease 8-inch glass pie plate or 9-inch square cake pan.
2. Beat butter, sugar, eggs and vanilla until thick and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Fold in flour by hand. Fold in cranberries and pecans. Pour into prepared pan, and spread evenly.
3. Bake 45 minutes, or until cake tester inserted in center comes out clean. Serve hot or cold.

PER SERVING: 340 CAL; 4G PROT; 20G TOTAL FAT (8G SAT. FAT); 37G CARB; 85MG CHOL; 95MG SOD; 3G FIBER; 27G SUGARS ■

Sibi's Crustless Cranberry-Pecan Pie

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who2give2

Every Sunday, dozens of homeless, hungry souls gather in Boston's Cambridge Common for a free vegetarian meal prepared in a nearby church kitchen by volunteers from Bread & Jams. There might be stuffed peppers or a big stir-fry, plus salads, beans, fruit—just the nourishment people down on their luck need but rarely receive. In harsh weather, the crowd shifts into the church. If people need a coat, boots or an encouraging word, they can get that too. Amazing things result. In the case of Ron Williams, once a regular, eventually the Bread & Jams staff recognized abilities others hadn't seen and offered him a job—one he's kept ever since.

Stories like Ron's are not as rare as you might guess, thanks to dozens of little-known groups that do big things on tiny budgets. We've chosen 5 for you to consider during this giving season. These non-profits • provide critical services • are thrifty • strive to be good stewards of resources • work at the grass-roots level • care for the Earth and the people, plants and animals it sustains. In other words, they exemplify vegetarian values. So do many other small, wonderful organizations, and from time to time we plan to cover more of them, so please tell us about your favorites. Meanwhile, these 5 are a great place to start. And oh, yeah—give generously.

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sustainable harvest int'l.

WHERE:
Works in Central America, out of headquarters in Surry, Maine

WHAT:
Promotes sustainable agriculture and reforestation in Honduras, Panama, Belize and Nicaragua

HOW MANY:
Has helped more than 70 communities, 700 farmers and 50 schools plant 1 million trees and save 40,000 acres from slash-and-burn destruction

WHO:
Some 70 volunteers and 18 local agents work with founder Florence Reed, a former Peace Corps volunteer

WHY:
To foster sustainable land-use practices that reduce poverty and protect the rural Central American environment

By teaching one farmer sustainable practices on one acre of rain forest, "we save 12 acres from slash-and-burn"—the practice of cutting down and/or burning off vegetation to clear land for crops or cattle—estimates Florence Reed, the founder of Sustainable Harvest International (SHI). The group encourages farmers to raise and sell organic vegetables, not beef. "Our only non-vegetarian activities involve helping families establish fish ponds to provide protein, if they can't grow non-animal protein," Reed says.

SHI also helps farmers build stoves that use fuel produced from chicken manure instead of firewood. To conserve the fragile, shallow topsoil, farmers are taught to mulch, compost and use plant barriers to control erosion.

"I have learned how and why to use live fence posts, to plant with the contours of the earth and to grow without burning and ruining my land," says Daniel Castro, a Honduran farmer who raises coffee, timber trees, yucca, plantains and vegetables. "Now my crops produce better than those who burn their land and apply a ton of chemicals." Says supporter Jill Kammermeyer, who traveled to Belize to witness SHI's efforts, "It's amazing to see how self-sustaining the people and gardens are everywhere SHI works."

WHAT YOUR GIFT WILL BUY

$25 teaches one family organic gardening

$50 buys 10,000 tree seeds

$100 converts chicken manure to gas to fuel a small cook stove

www.sustainableharvest.org 81 Newbury Neck Rd., Surry, ME 04684 207.664.0987

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bread & jams, inc.

"Monday through Friday, there're all kinds of places to eat," says Ron Williams, homeless himself for almost a decade. "But Sundays—there's nowhere." Nowhere, that is, until Bread & Jams began (the jams refers to live music provided with the meal, thanks to local performers). Ron, who came for the food, also got clothes and health care through Bread & Jams—and, finally, he got a job. "I'm 41, and today I have my first credit card," he says. "I've got a checking account and a savings account. I've got money in my wallet. Bread & Jams turned my life around."

"At Bread & Jams, most of the hard work is done by people who themselves have been homeless but now provide counseling and tough love to others," says Bob Hurlbut of the Cambridge Community Foundation, a long-time B&J supporter. "We keep the meal vegetarian because people who are homeless or low-income often don't get a lot of fruits and vegetables in their diet," adds meal coordinator Mitch Zeisler. To offer three or four meatless entreés every Sunday, Bread & Jams gleans produce from Boston's Quincy Market, a food mecca with a conscience.

WHERE:

Cambridge, Massachusetts

WHAT:

Self-help for the homeless (the staff includes many once-homeless individuals)—provides free food, clothing, showers, laundry, access to phone/mail service and health care

HOW MANY:

Has served about 78,000 vegetarian meals—100 people have been fed every Sunday for 15 years

WHO:

200 volunteers prepare and serve the meals; 30 more provide other services

WHY:

To improve health and nutrition of the homeless, connect them to services and help them turn their lives around

WHAT YOUR GIFT WILL BUY

$25 provides a Sunday meal for 15 people

$150 replaces pots, pans and utensils for one year

www.breadandjams.org 1151 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138 617.441.3831

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hearts united for animals

WHERE:

Auburn, Nebraska

WHAT:

A national, no-kill shelter and animal-welfare organization, Hearts United for Animals rescues mainly dogs (though cats are helped too), sending them to homes in 44 states and Canada

HOW MANY:

Has saved the lives of more than 8,000 puppies in 8 years

WHO:

More than 100 volunteers regularly care for the animals at the Nebraska headquarters; dozens of people in other states make home visits to approve families hoping to adopt pets

WHY:

"We have a dream—a future where all dogs and cats are spayed or neutered so there is never an unwanted litter, where euthanasia is ended forever, and where all dogs and cats have homes with people who love and care for them."

In the spring of 2002, a yellow female lab mix, hit by a train and half-dead, was dumped at a shelter in Georgia, which didn't have the equipment to treat her. "But she touched the workers' hearts," says Lee Wheeler, of Hearts United for Animals (HUA). "We paid to bring her to Nebraska. She's so optimistic we named her Joyful." After $2,000 in surgery, including amputation of a nearly severed leg, and months of recovery, a now-healthy Joyful has been adopted by a loving home.

At HUA, 250 dogs romp free in fields on two Nebraska farms, sleep in warm beds, eat good food and receive medical care. HUA also offers spaying and neutering services, vaccinations, heartworm and Lyme tests—free to those who can't pay. A veterinarian charges reduced rates, and two nearby vet schools send students to help. Founded in 1990, HUA now receives 1,000 emails a day, asking to send dogs needing medical care.

Jet Set Dogs, an HUA program, flies in rescued dogs. Prisoners of Greed, another HUA spinoff, teaches the public about commercial kennels, where 500,000 puppies each year are bred in often grim conditions for sale to pet shops. Wheeler is hated by many who breed pets for profit. Despite death threats and being run off the road, she perseveres: "My mother always said we do it because we love the animals."

WHAT YOUR GIFT WILL BUY

$25 buys food for 2 weeks for a dog rescued from starvation

$100 buys shelter for 2 months for a dog fleeing violence

$250 buys airline fare for a dog being rescued from a distant state

www.hua.org PO Box 286, Auburn, NE 68305 402.274.3679

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Checking Out a Charity

To decide which other groups deserve your hard-earned dollars, check these Web sites. A key criteria for large, well-established charities: 80 percent or more of what they raise should go to their cause, not to overhead, salaries, etc.

www.guidestar.org Provides details about the missions, accomplishments and finances of almost 1 million nonprofits. Takes do-it-yourself calculation to figure out what percentages are spent on programs.

www.charitynavigator.org Charts clearly show percentages spent on services. Evaluates more than 3,000 of the largest US charities, awarding one to four stars based on how they use their money and how likely they are to survive.

www.charitywatch.org An arm of the American Institute of Philanthropy, Charity Watch grades large charities.

www.give.org Lists hundreds of larger charities that do/do not meet its standards, and offers tips on giving. (Site of the Wise Giving Alliance.)

The Whole Story

When examining ratings by watchdog groups, remember that percentages don't tell the whole story. Charity Navigator, for example, is cautious about Project Open Hand because its expenses are rising more rapidly than revenues. But that's often the case with shoestring organizations, which try to do as much as they can and then sometimes have to scramble to pay bills. That's also why such organizations need donations.

And while, ideally, organizations should spend at least 80 percent of their funds on their programs, with smaller and newer charities, rent, utilities and start-up equipment can consume a larger share of expenses. Over time, that changes. But to make it happen, they need your help.

project open hand

When Lee Jewell of San Francisco developed AIDS-related pneumonia and was too weak to feed himself, volunteers from Project Open Hand (POH) appeared at his door, meals in hand, and "literally saved my life," he says.

POH was founded by Ruth Brinker in 1985. After taking food to an AIDS-stricken friend too weak to cook, Brinker, a grandmother at the time, "felt compelled to start a meal service to provide people with the kind of nutrition they obviously needed." Though working full-time, she commandeered a city lot to grow organic vegetables and wangled the use of a church kitchen to cook in quantity. Today, clients receive meals plus a weekly bag stuffed with pasta, rice, fruits, vegetables, milk, butter and cheese. A dietitian provides free nutrition counseling and posts healthful recipes—many vegetarian ones—on POH's Web site.

WHERE:

San Francisco (the oldest and largest), Atlanta and Columbus, Ohio

WHAT:

Delivers meals—including vegetarian meals—to homebound and critically ill people, from AIDS victims to seniors

HOW MANY:

Together, the three Project Open Hand groups deliver 340,000 meals and 133,000 bags of groceries a year to homebound people, and they serve 330,000 meals to seniors

WHO:

750 volunteers prepare, deliver or serve food

WHY:

To fight malnutrition among people too weak or too poor to eat well

WHAT YOUR GIFT WILL BUY

$35 nourishes a person for 7 days

$250 buys groceries for 4 weeks

$500 feeds someone for 3 months

To make a donation, contact Project Open Hand at the branches below:

www.openhand.org
730 Polk Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
415.447.2300

www.projectopenhand.org
176 Ottley Drive
Atlanta, GA 30324
404.872.8089

www.projectopenhand-columbus.org
82 E. 16th Ave.
Columbus, OH 43201
614.298.8334

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plenty international

When a 1976 earthquake devastated Guatemala, volunteers from Plenty International (PI), then known as The Farm, went to Central America to help build more than 1,200 houses, schools and public buildings. They introduced the Mayans to soybeans and soy-based foods, which led to the construction of a Mayan soy dairy—and an expanded PI presence throughout the world. For example, working with SOYNICA, a health and nutrition program started by women in Managua, PI hopes to establish soy facilities in Nicaragua's seven regions. And in the US, Plenty International supports organic gardening on a Lakota Indian reservation in South Dakota.■

WHERE:

Works with disadvantaged people around the world from headquarters based in Summertown, Tennessee

WHAT:

Promotes sustainable agriculture and a plant-centered diet

HOW MANY:

Has developed soy projects in Africa, Central America and the Caribbean; now working in Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua and Belize

WHO:

Plenty International evolved from a 1971 vegetarian hippie community. The group grew their own food, built a soy dairy plant and eventually founded Plenty International to distribute food to those in need.

WHY:

To improve nutrition, food security and self-sufficiency among the poor

WHAT YOUR GIFT WILL BUY

$25 buys a cup of soymilk or soy ice cream cones for 125 children in Mexico or Guatemala

$250 pays for a nutrition and soy cooking demonstration for 30 people

$500 sends a trainee to SOYNICA in Nicaragua for one week to improve skills

www.plenty.org
PO Box 394
Summertown, TN 38483
931.964.4323

hint: An easy way to donate is by shopping at **www.iGive.com.** Some 530 merchants, including **eBay, Barnes & Noble, Lands' End** and **JC Penney,** will donate a percentage of purchases to any charity you designate.

Others to Consider

Recovering food, and distributing it to the needy:

Farm Share (Florida)
www.farmshare.org

Food Lifeline (Washington)
www.foodlifeline.org

Borderland Food Bank (Arizona)
180 E. Produce Terminal Rd.
Nogales, AZ 85621

Promoting and teaching organic gardening:

Growing Gardens of
Boulder County (Colorado)
www.growinggardens.org

Garden Resources of Washington (DC)
www.growdc.org

Wasatch Community Gardens
(Salt Lake City, UT)
www.wasatchgardens.org

Self-help for the homeless and impoverished:

Action Inc. (Cape Ann, MA)
www.actioninc.org

Promoting soy foods in developing countries:

Doctors for Global Health
www.dghonline.org

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Cutting-Edge Cuisine

The fourth edition of Cutting-Edge Cuisine for 2004 visits the Orlando Culinary Academy located in the heart of one of the world's best-known tourism centers.

Orlando Culinary Academy (OCA) located in the heart of one of the world's tourism centers, is the prime location for students to learn the passion of the kitchen. Orlando provides an endless array of opportunities for students to learn and develop today's top culinary trends.

OCA is one of thirteen schools that make up Le Cordon Bleu North America. The curriculum focuses on developing hands-on culinary arts skills, which can be applied in a wide variety of segments of the hospitality industry. The academy stresses professionalism, teamwork and proper technique. OCA currently offers two associates of applied science degrees in Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Arts, and another in Patisserie and Baking Arts. The academy will launch associates and bachelors programs in Hospitality and Restaurant Management in early 2005. The state-of-the-art teaching facility is accompanied by the student-run restaurant Machon, featuring French-fusion cuisine.

The students who developed these recipes represent different levels of curriculum within the program, and they are all members of the Sprouts Club, a fellowship of students who are interested in learning organic gardening. They study different types of produce and fresh cooking ideas through special demonstrations, tastings and extracurricular field trips. Members provide the kitchens with a large assortment of herbs and vegetables. The students are mentored by Chef Jennifer Carson, who oversees and coaches the proper ways to care for herbs and inspires them to always reach for the next level.

For more information, visit Orlando Culinary Academy on the Web at www.orlandoculinary.com, or call (888)-OCA-CHEF.

Banana Bread Pudding

THE CHEFS: Jennifer Carson, Don Henderson, James Hyde, Kit Croson, Mike Frasca, Sue Ballard, Tammy Marsh, Timm Johnson, Dave Arnold

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advance and refrigerate until ready to use. If you don't have a grill, you can use a grill pan or just roast the vegetables in the oven.

Serves 4

Tomato and Olive Salsa

5 ripe plum tomatoes, stemmed and diced
¼ cup black olives, seeded and chopped
4 Tbs. capers
FRONTIER Natural Sea Salt to taste
FRONTIER Ground Black Pepper to taste
2 Tbs. RAPUNZEL Extra Virgin Spanish Olive Oil
2 Tbs. EDEN Selected Red Wine Vinegar

Roasted Garlic Hummus

2 cloves garlic, roasted
2 Tbs. lemon juice
1 cup MARANATHA Cashew Butter
8 oz. BUSH'S BEST Garbanzo Beans
3 tsp. RAPUNZEL Extra Virgin Spanish Olive Oil
Pinch FRONTIER Organics Ground Paprika
⅛ tsp. FRONTIER Organics Ground Cumin
FRONTIER Natural Sea Salt to taste
FRONTIER Ground Black Pepper to taste

Roasted and Grilled Vegetables

1 Bermuda onion, papery skin removed, and sliced into ½-inch-thick slices, keeping rings together
1 medium eggplant, washed and stem removed, cut lengthwise into ⅛-inch-thick strips
2 Tbs. RAPUNZEL Extra Virgin Spanish Olive Oil
FRONTIER Natural Sea Salt to taste
FRONTIER Ground Black Pepper to taste
1 medium red bell pepper, washed

Spinach Filling

2 whole wheat pita breads
2 Tbs. RAPUNZEL Extra Virgin Spanish Olive Oil
FRONTIER Natural Sea Salt to taste
20 pieces of fresh spinach, stemmed, ribbed, rinsed and dried

Garnish

2 tsp. honey, cold
Fresh lemon wedges

1. Preheat grill or oven to 400F.
2. To make Salsa: Combine tomatoes, olives, capers, salt and pepper. Add mixture of oil and red wine vinegar. Stir until the vegetables are evenly coated, but not too soupy. Let mellow for 30 minutes.
3. To make Hummus: Put roasted garlic, cashew butter, beans, oil, paprika, cumin, salt and pepper in bowl of a food processor, and purée until smooth. Scrape down sides. Drizzle in water as needed until mixture reaches consistency of mayonnaise. Adjust flavorings. Cover and chill.
4. To make Roasted Vegetables: Put onions and eggplants on cookie sheet. Brush evenly with oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place onions and eggplant on hottest part of grill, and cook until tender. Sprinkle top sides of vegetables with salt and pepper. Turn vegetables over, and repeat process. Remove vegetables from grill, and keep warm.
5. Roll red pepper in olive oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place red pepper directly on grill. Cook until outer skin is black and crispy. Continue rolling pepper and charring skin until entire pepper is charred. Remove from grill, and place in bowl, covering tightly with plastic wrap. When cool, remove plastic wrap. Using paper towel, rub skin off. Slice pepper in half, and remove seeds and stems. Slice into 1-inch strips.
6. Cut eggplant slices into 2-inch pieces. Separate onion into rings. Brush both sides of pita bread with oil, and sprinkle with salt. Place both pieces of pita on grill until slightly toasted, warm, and lightly brown. Remove pita from grill, and cut each in half. Open up each side of pocket.
7. Spread evenly with the hummus. Place the spinach leaves on one side of pita. Distribute onion rings, sliced eggplant, and sliced red pepper evenly on top of spinach. Immediately before eating, drizzle vegetables with fresh honey and a squeeze of lemon juice. Serve with Tomato and Olive Salsa.

WINE SUGGESTION
Frey Organic Sangiovese 2002

ORGANIC CREAM CHEESE PIE

To make yogurt curd, or yogurt "cheese," line a small strainer or colander with 2 coffee filters and place over a deep bowl. Plac⁻ 16 ounces of yogurt in the filter, and cover with plastic wrap. The curds and whey will separate, leaving just the curds, or thick cheese, in the strainer. This may take from 8 to 24 hours. Occasionally, if needed, carefully stir the yogurt, being careful not to break the coffee filters. Once separated, the yogurt should have the consistency of baked custard. After it has separated, the yogurt curd has only a 1- to 2-day shelf life. Serve the pie with fresh fruit.

Makes one 8-inch pie

1 8-inch graham cracker crust
1 cup DOMINO Organic Sugar, or more to taste
8 oz. organic cream cheese
8 oz. STONYFIELD FARM Organic Plain Yogurt, separated into curd
2 large eggs
¼ cup BOB'S RED MILL All-Purpose Flour
1 Tbs. FRONTIER Vanilla Baking Extract
1 Tbs. grated lemon zest

1. Preheat oven to 450F. Put graham cracker crust in oven about 5 minutes to warm up. Remove, and set aside.
2. Cream sugar, cream cheese, yogurt curd and eggs on high speed with electric mixer for 1 minute. Mix in flour, vanilla, and lemon zest until just blended. Pour mixture into prepared crust. Place pie pan in larger, thin pan with enough water to come up side ¼ inch.
3. Bake for 10 minutes, then reduce temperature to 250F for 35 minutes, or until center of pie is solid when shaken lightly and a thermometer inserted into the center of the pie reads 165F. Remove from oven and water bath. Let cool for 10 minutes, and refrigerate until chilled.

WINE SUGGESTION
Frey Organic Natural White NV

BLOOD ORANGE COOLER

This is a fun and colorful drink, a great eye opener. For variety, make this with lemon-lime soda or ginger ale for a "mocktail." If you can't find blood orange purée or concentrate, juice fresh blood oranges, and decrease the amount of champagne used to equal 2.5 cups total liquid.

Serves 4

About 5 stems fresh mint, for garnish
Ice cubes
1 cup blood orange purée, or blood orange concentrate
1½ cups demi sec Champagne
2 Tbs. STEVIA SWEETLEAF Sweetener or to taste
Orange slices for garnish

Rub mint leaf around the insides of 4 tall glasses. Fill each halfway with ice. Mix together juice and champagne in a pitcher. Add stevia while stirring. Pour mixture slowly over ice. Garnish with mint sprigs and orange slices, and serve.

Resources

Prepare your own cutting-edge cuisine with ingredients from the following sponsors of our special culinary program. Look for them in your natural foods store or supermarket. If you are unable to locate products in your area, please contact our sponsors directly for a source near you.

Bob's Red Mill
800.349.2173; www.bobsredmill.com

Bush Beans
www.bushbeans.com

Domino Organic Sugar
www.dominofoods.com

Eden Foods
888.424.EDEN; www.edenfoods.com

Frey Premium Wines
800.760.3739; www.freywine.com

Florida Crystals
www.floridacrystals.com

Frontier Natural Spices
800.669.3275 www.floridacrystals.com

Nasoya Foods
800.229.TOFU; www.nasoya.com

Pacific Bakery
760.757.6020; www.pacificbakery.com

Rapunzel Pure Organics
800.207.2814; www.rapunzel.com

Stonyfield Farm Yogurt
800.PRO.COWS; www.stonyfield.com

Sweetleaf SteviaPlus
800.899.9908; www.sweetleaf.com

Tropical Source Chocolates & Maranatha Nut butters
510.686.0116; www.nspiredfoods.com

Vitasoy USA, Inc.
800.VITASOY; www.vitasoy-usa.com

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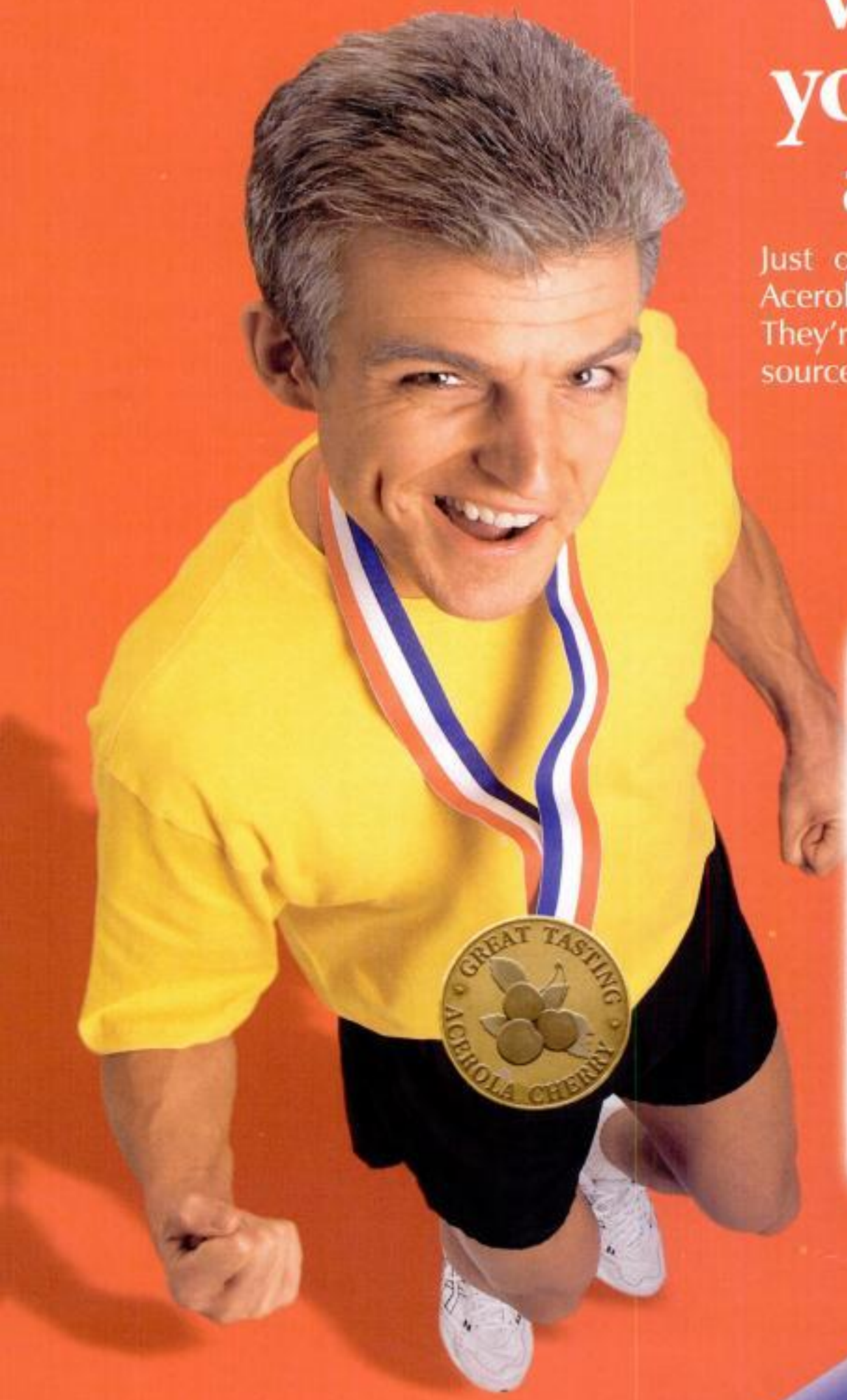
Our Acerola will make you feel like a winner.

Just one taste of our Chewable Super Acerola Plus and you'll feel like a winner. They're so delicious and made from a great source of vitamin C... Acerola cherries!*



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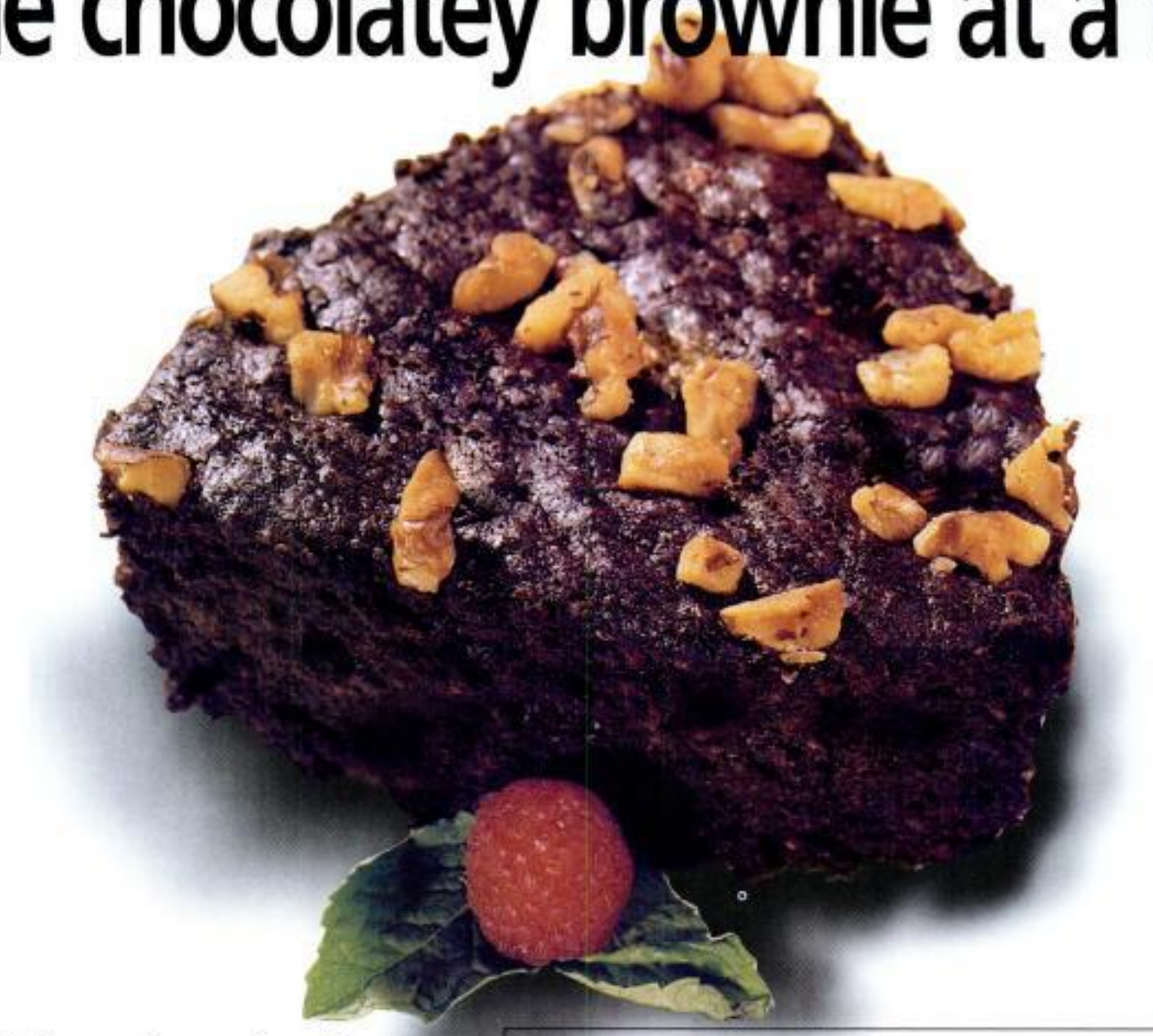
MORI-NU

Changing tofu attitudes. One chocolatey brownie at a time.



You will love these luscious, dairy-free, cholesterol-free, guilt-free chocolate brownies. Made with Mori-Nu Silken Tofu. Another delicious recipe from Mori-Nu. Change your attitude not your taste.

Tasty Tofu Brownie Snacks

Dry Ingredients:
- 1-1/3 cups cake flour
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon

Wet Ingredients:
- 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1 tsp. canola oil
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 pkg. **Mori-Nu Silken Lite Firm Tofu**
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup European processed cocoa powder

Optional Garnish:
- 2 Tbsp. chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Cut a piece of wax paper to fit in bottom of 8x8" baking pan. With paper removed, grease bottom and sides of pan with vegetable shortening. Place waxed paper on top of greased pan bottom and grease top of waxed paper.

In food processor fitted with metal chopping blade, process all dry ingredients. Empty into small bowl and set aside.

Place all wet ingredients in work bowl and process until smooth, scraping the bowl sides occasionally.

Add dry mixture all at once. Pulse to blend until dry ingredients are just moistened.

Scrape mixture into prepared pan, sprinkle with nuts.

Bake for 22 minutes or until brownies pull away from sides. Let cool for 15 minutes before turning out.

Makes 12 Brownies

Per brownie: 121 calories, 3.4g protein, 25g carbohydrates, 1g fat, 0mg cholesterol, 80mg sodium

Courtesy of Solae, LLC. For more recipes, visit www.solaeliving.com

MORI-NU Morinaga Nutritional Foods, Inc., 2441 W. 205th St., Suite C-102, Torrance, CA 90501. For more free recipes, visit our website at www.morinu.com.

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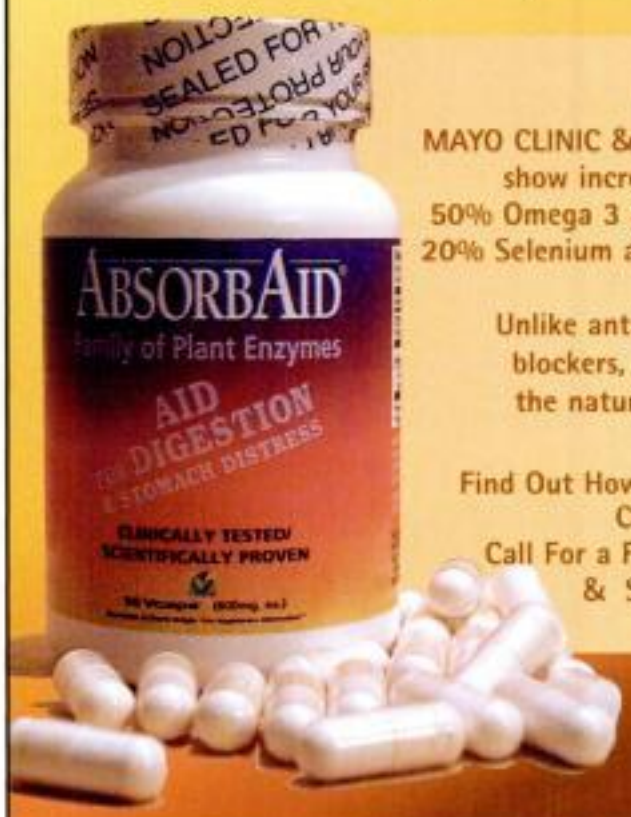

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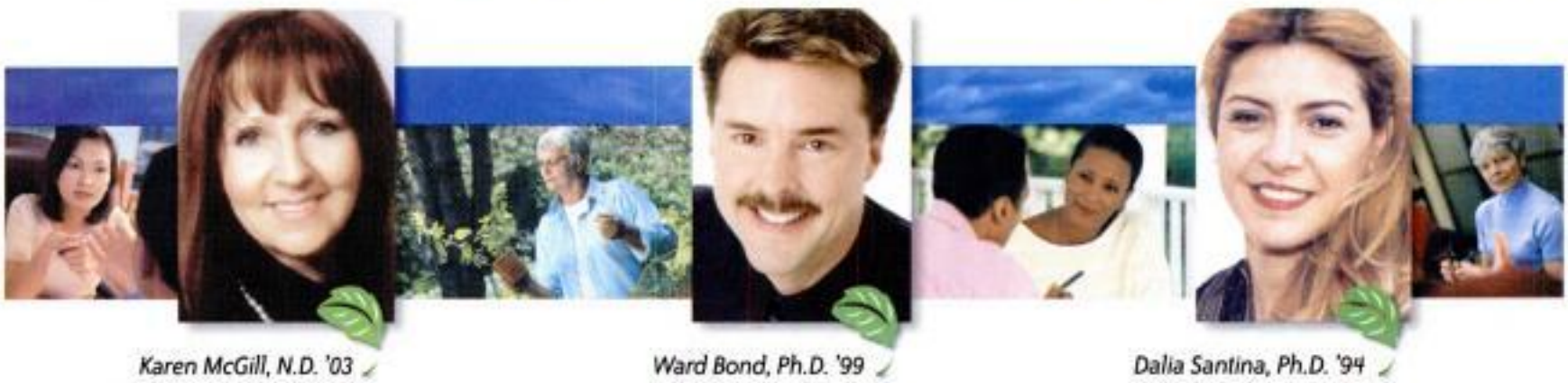

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Info Center

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800.349.2173
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4. Eden Foods
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888.424.EDEN
edenfoods.com

5. Fairfield Farm Kitchens
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877.400.5997 ext 258
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floridacrystals.com

7. Forkless Gourmet Bun Meals
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312.474.5746
forklessgourmet.com

8. Fit Fruit & Vegetable Wash
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fitwash.com

9. Frontier Natural Products Co-Op
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frontiercoop.com

10. Hodgson Mill
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800.347.0105
HodgsonMill.com

11. Ian's
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IansNaturalFoods.com

12. Joyva
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13. LightLife Foods
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800.SOY.EASY
Lightlife.com

14. Morningstar Farms
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800.962.0120
morningstarfarms.com

15. Meru Tea
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merutea.com

16. Nasoya
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800.848.2769
nasoya.com

17. Nature's Path
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604.940.0505
Naturespath.com

18. Pacific Bakery
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760.757.6020
Pacificbakery.com

19. Purity Foods
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purityfoods.com

20. Rapunzel Pure Organics
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true to nature
800.207.2814
rapunzel.com

21. Spectrum Organics
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vegetarian times

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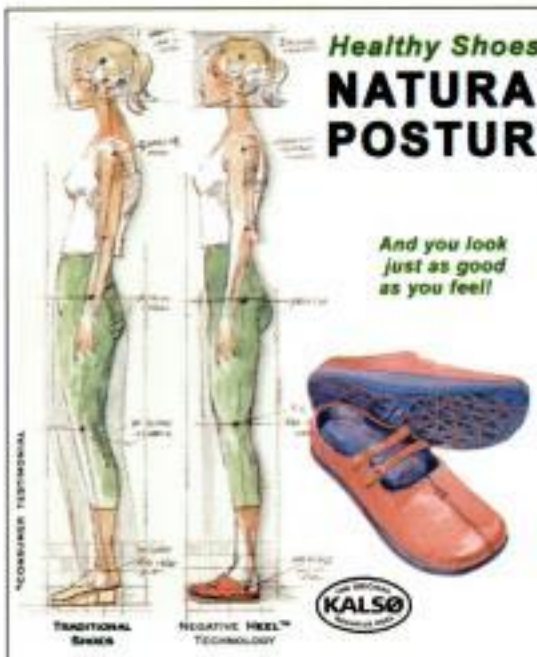

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fridge NOTES

Take These Lists When You Hit the Grocery

You won't find it listed on any label, but every time you buy produce that isn't certified organic—that is, grown without conventional pesticides and fertilizers—you're bringing home potentially nasty stuff that can't always be washed off. Some chemicals cling with amazing stubbornness; others leach inside the produce. Thankfully, not all conventionally grown fruits and vegetables are vulnerable. Which should you be most careful about? The Environmental Working Group, a leading consumer watchdog organization, has come up with these lists:

HIGHEST IN PESTICIDES

Fruits
- Apples
- Cherries
- Imported grapes
- Nectarines
- Peaches
- Pears
- Raspberries
- Strawberries

Vegetables
- Bell peppers
- Celery
- Hot peppers
- Potatoes
- Spinach

LOWEST IN PESTICIDES

Fruits
- Bananas
- Blueberries
- Grapefruit
- Kiwi fruit
- Mangoes
- Papayas
- Pineapples
- Plantains
- Plums
- Watermelons

Vegetables
- Asparagus
- Avocados
- Broccoli

"NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD; INDEED, IT IS THE ONLY THING THAT EVER DOES."

— MARGARET MEAD, AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST

Q:

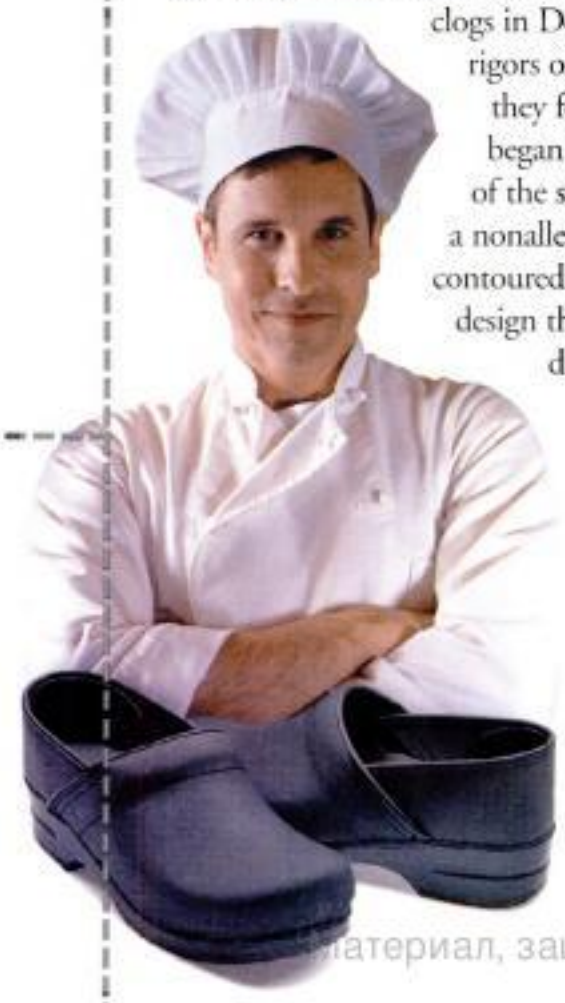
What's a Dutch oven anyway?

A:

Simply a squat, round or oval pot with two loop handles that's traditionally made of cast iron (because it soaks up heat and cooks food evenly). Dutch ovens were originally designed for outdoor cooking—think wagon trains and Civil War camps—but today they're used to sauté or deep fry foods, simmer stews, cook casseroles, even bake bread. They're as handy on the stovetop as in the oven. Historians generally agree that the Dutch introduced American colonists to this hot pot. More than 200 years later, it has an online fan club: the International Dutch Oven Society, www.idos.com, for tips, recipes and more.

These Shoes Were Made for Cooking

Countless chefs, including Wolfgang Puck, swear by Dansko clogs, the hip but healthful Danish shoes designed with comfort in mind. The company's founders, Amanda Cabot and Peter Kjellerup, are former horse trainers who discovered the supportive clogs in Denmark and put them through the rigors of 18-hour barn days. Impressed, they founded Dansko in 1991 and began expanding the line. The secrets of the shoes' mystique: tons of toe room; a nonallergenic sockling that absorbs sweat; contoured "rocker" soles; and an anatomical design that eases leg, feet and back muscles during hours of standing. No wonder cooks love them. Look for Dansko shoes on Adam Sandler's feet in "Spanglish," which opens December 17. Yes, he plays a chef. To find your own pair, call 800.DANSKO.4 or visit www.dansko.com. ■



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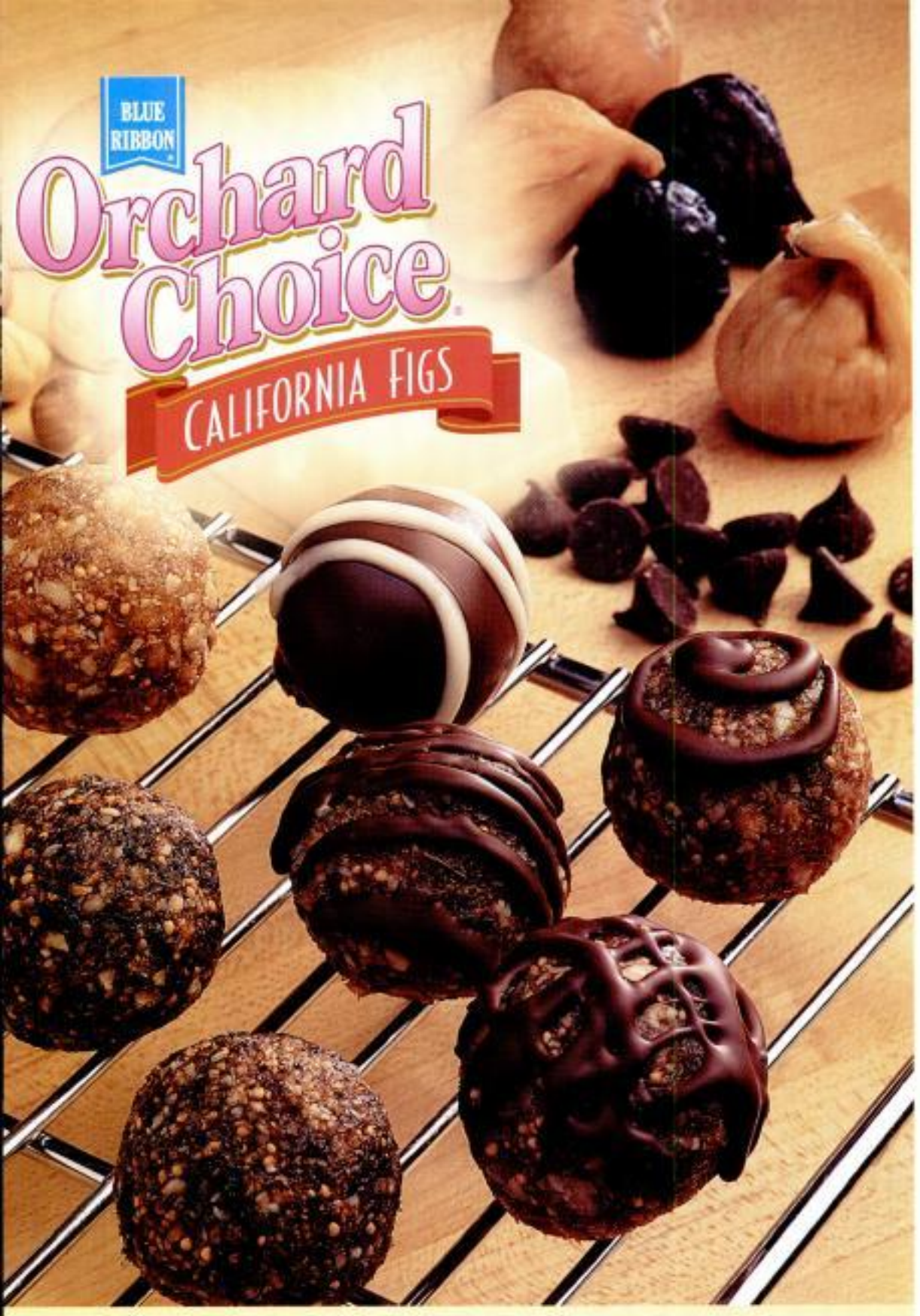

Create Magical Moments with Figs

Golden, slightly nutty flavored Calimyrna and dark, sweet Mission figs are a creative way to add finesse to holiday cooking. Toasted almonds, succulent figs, a splash of rum, and a twist of orange come together in Chocolate Fig Bon Bons for a stunning holiday treat. Figs are nature's perfect little package of sweet, whole fruit goodness with a variety of essential nutrients not commonly found in fruits. Calcium and iron join potassium and dietary fiber to give Blue Ribbon® Orchard Choice® and Sun-Maid® Dried California figs a unique and very desirable nutrition profile. Versatile, convenient and richly flavored, figs are a great year round snack and an ideal ingredient for desserts, salads, entrees and grain side dishes. Visit the Valley Fig Growers' website: **www.valleyfig.com** for more great recipes and tips.

Chocolate Fig Bon Bons

- 8 oz. Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Calimyrna or Mission California Figs, stems removed
- 2/3 cup (3 oz.) toasted hazelnuts or almonds
- 8 vanilla wafer cookies, crushed
- 1/3 cup powdered sugar
- 1/4 cup rum
- 1 tsp. grated orange peel
- 3 oz. (or more) semisweet or white chocolate
- Vegetable oil

Process figs, hazelnuts and vanilla wafers in food processor until finely ground. Add powdered sugar, rum and orange peel; process until mixed. Dampen hands and shape mixture into 1 1/4-inch balls. Arrange close together on a baking sheet or wire rack. In small, deep, microwave-safe bowl, heat chocolate on HIGH 1-2 minutes, stirring after 1 minute. Add a few drops of vegetable oil if needed to make chocolate thin enough to drizzle. Dip the tips of a fork in the chocolate and quickly drizzle over the fig balls, or dip each ball in chocolate. Refrigerate until chocolate is set. Store in airtight container up to 1 week. Makes about 25 bon bons.

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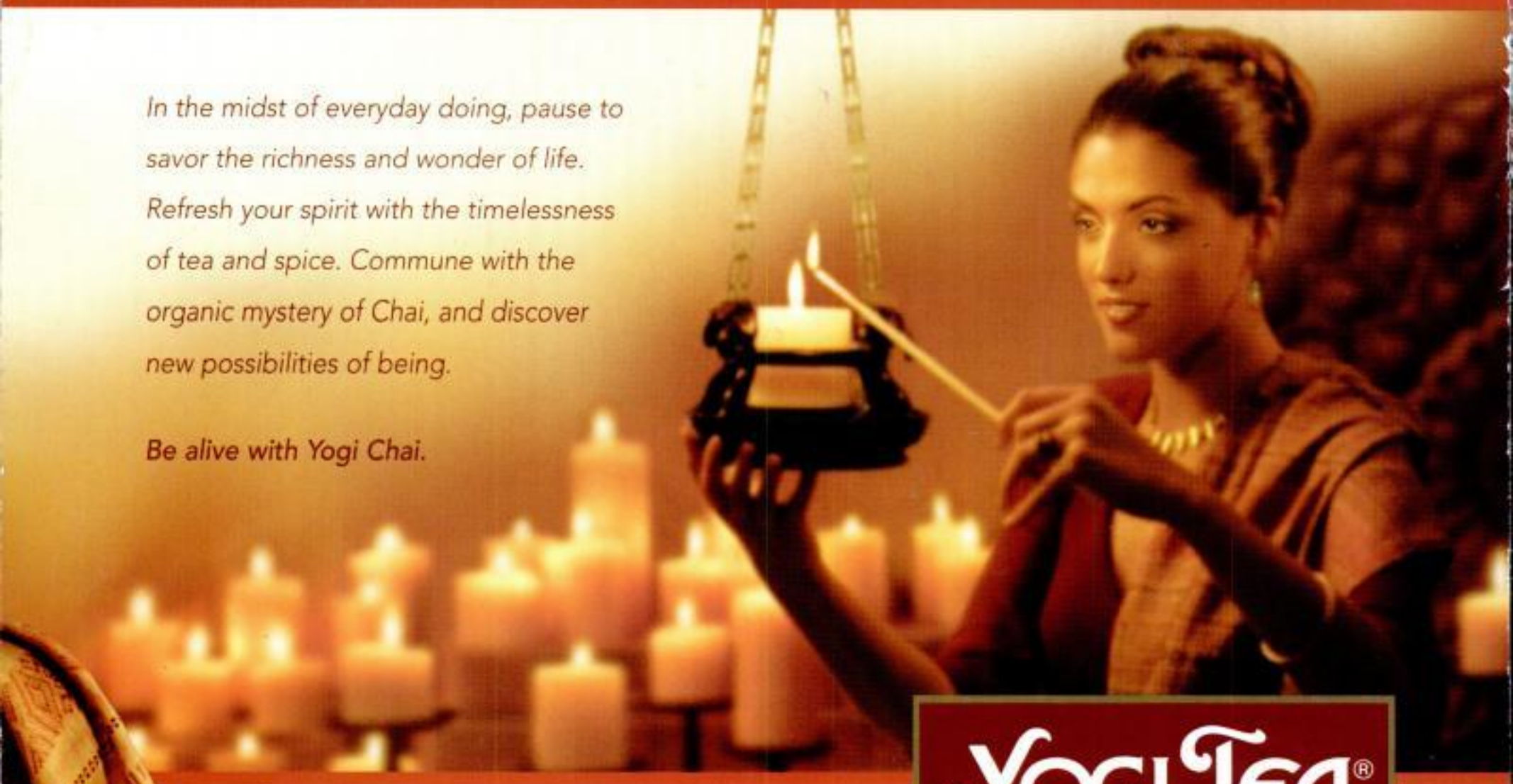

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